/140 cont./

301 Earrings of Molentza chain; necklaces of glass beads. Rings on arms, wrists, and legs as among the men.

[756] The "Bushman doctor" wears special ornaments that other people are not permitted to wear. Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain any of these ornaments.

[882] Girls, it is said, do not start wearing ornaments until after their first menses.

[796] All the ornaments are worn for dances and ceremonies. The headdress of the women in Photograph 20 is worn only on special festive occasions.

302 The "doctor" has his head shaved smooth. I did not notice [756] a special hairdress. The men frequently stick individual loose ostrich feathers in the hair, while the women like to braid brass [301] or iron beads into the hair. In addition, the women use a kind of pomade made of various pulverized plant parts which are combined with fat from antelope skin.

Men sometimes cut their head-hair with a knife or a piece of glass.

There is no differentiation in hair style between girls and married women.

[386] The hair is frequently dyed with a mixture of fat and red clay. I am uncertain, however, whether or not this is a means of making the hair fall out in places. On the other hand, in that case there would probably have to be another ingredient /141/ in this mixture that I was unable to discover.

In case a beard is present, which does not occur often, it is neither cut nor removed in any other way.

[142] Pubic hair is sparse and is sometimes shaved off (with a piece of glass). It is said that women have no pubic hair at all.

E. Artificial Deformities

A kind of cosmetic of a reddish-brown color is used by the women.

It consists of a mixture of fat and red clay (see Section D above) and is manufactured by the women themselves.

[535] This cosmetic is regarded solely as a means of beautification and is used especially at festivals (dances).

/141 cont./

302 Men and boys do not use this cosmetic, nor do old women, but only young women and girls.

The mixture is applied in circles on the cheeks (see Photo. 20, woman farthest to the left), but it is also rubbed on the body in any other place possible, such as on the arms or belly. Frequently the entire body is greased with it.

Among men a kind of black grease is used. This has "a pleasant odor," at least according to Bushman notions. It is [756] manufactured by the "doctor." The men smear it under and on the nose. It is questionable whether it is more a means of beautification or of enjoyment.

304 All male Auin have a green line over the root of the nose, and usually also a crossbar under and at right angles to it. The crossbar is usually not colored (cf. Fig. 4).

Both lines consist of innumerable small transverse cuts. There are almost always two to four deep, especially conspicuous scars in the longer line. The length of the longitudinal line is usually from 2.5 to 3.5 centimeters, and that of the crossbar from one to 1.5 centimeters. Sometimes the longitudinal line is considerably longer and extends to the hairline. In the case of one Auin about 20 years old, no forehead tattoo was observed. In answer to questioning he replied that "it would be done later." On the other hand, I found a forehead tattoo on a quite undeveloped girl who [881] was at most eight years old. Hence it would seem that the tattoo is not connected with sexual maturity, an impression which the Auin themselves confirmed. One woman had two parallel longitudinal lines; another had two lines on each cheek, which in size and execution were like the vertical forehead line. Both were Auin by birth; in other words, they had not married into the tribe.

[177] According to the statements of the Auin, the forehead tattoo was copied from the Betschuana.

The forehead tattoo is called gi. Evidently no special significance is attached to it. Incidentally, I have seen the same tattoo among all the other Bushmen tribes. [Fig. 4 appears here.]

As a tool for making the countless little transverse incisions [412] that constitute the forehead tattoo, any sharpened little piece of iron may be used. I was unable to determine the pigment used to produce the green color, which is indelible.

/154 cont./

722 Women were not taken along on the expedition; the women of the settlement attacked immediately ran away.

[622] 701 In time of war the chiefs have general powers of command. Their authority is apparently no greater than in peacetime, when it is insignificant. Indeed, it is scarcely intelligible to us how a war can be carried on effectively under such circumstances.

[888] [756] Old people naturally have greater influence. The "doctor" is merely an accompanying warrior without special authority. Generally speaking, everyone for the most part does what he considers should be done; some co-operation is nevertheless apparent.

726 There is no fighting at night; at most they will march then.

619 Alliances are concluded, even between groups speaking different languages. For instance, men of different Auin settlements will ally themselves with a Naroon [Naron] settlement to attack another Auin settlement.

There is no political connection between all the Auin settlements. They form a single community only by virtue of their common language. For example, bitter hostility exists between the Auin of Gam and the Auin of Rietfontein, while the relations between the Rietfontein Auin and the Naroon settlements south of them are amicable. The two can communicate only through interpreters.

701 Young people who are staying in a given village for courtship participate without ado in the warlike undertakings of this village. I am unable to say what happens in case the undertaking is directed at the home settlement of the candidate for marriage.

Concerning the war dance and the accompanying song, see page 37.

727 Captured men are killed, and usually boys as well (because of the danger of blood vengeance).

Women and children are taken away, married, and completely assimilated into the group. Old women are killed. Objects that are useful are taken away; the rest is destroyed.

It is not worth the trouble to set fire to the windscreens.

728 Hostilities are officially concluded; unarmed negotiators appear to have safe conduct. War damages are paid in the form of food, tools, and women.

The description of the form of government is the most difficult chapter of this account.

/158 cont./

T. Religion, Cult, Mythology

756 [789] The Bushman doctor conjures up rain by scattering on the ground a kind of red earth which he fetches from afar and carries about with him.

I regard the doctors, who take the place of sorcerers, as quite experienced people who have a considerable gift for observation. At the same time, they throw plenty of sand in their [775] [769] clients' eyes. The soul of the deceased does not die. The Bushmen have great fear of the dead and even of the place of death.

753 Illnesses that give rise to much pain and complaining on the part of the sufferers are regarded as having been caused by a higher power (demons); others are regarded as natural illness.

755 The doctor practices exorcism by saying magical charms over the sick person and finally, with the motion of a juggler, flinging to the ground a little piece of wood or the like which is supposed to have come from the body of the patient and to have caused the illness.

776 The only thing that I was able to establish concerning their religious notions, despite weeks of fruitless endeavor, /159/ is that a higher power exists which may be harmful to men and may cause them to perish from serious illnesses. This higher power, which is feared, dwells "above." I could not get them to do more than point upward in the direction of the sky, except for the statement that the feared power is far beyond the treetops. [Fig. 14 appears here.]

756 The doctor is both physician and sorcerer. He is probably also a priest, for whenever I asked questions concerning religion and the like, I was always referred to the doctor, who supposedly was informed about these matters.

Not every settlement has a doctor. Between Oas, Rietfontein, and Ganab (100 kilometers north of Rietfontein) there was supposedly only one.

The doctor has his head shaved smooth. In addition, he is said to wear ornaments that no other man may use.

Boys who have been apprenticed to a doctor for many years may later, when they have become older, replace their master.

In the treatment of the sick, charlatanism seems to be mixed

[Text continues on page 56]

/159 cont./

756 with a considerable portion of actual experience and knowledge.

The doctors are paid for their efforts.

There are also female doctors.

[648] I have observed no sign of hostility toward Whites among these people. They know how to evade observation, however, even better than the ordinary Bushman, and that says a good deal.

Only the doctor may eat a certain kind of poisonous snake, apparently the so-called black mamba, which I regard as an older type of cobra.

U. Totemism

771 I was unable to observe any indications that might lead one to deduce the existence of totemism.

V. Medicine

755 A man who was suffering from headache had colored his forehead with a black grease that supposedly had curative powers and had wound a thin thong firmly around his head. Our household remedy of firmly squeezing the sides of the aching head with both hands was familiar to the Auin.

278 752 The Bushman doctor makes an antidote from the black mamba, which he alone may eat. This antidote is supposed to help against the bites of all snakes, except that of the mamba itself.

He dries and pulverizes the lungs, gall, and liver, as well as the poisonous fangs with the poison glands. This powder is stirred into a paste with the fat of the same snake, and the paste, so I was informed, is rubbed into the enlarged wound, which has first been sucked out.

At the same time, various deep incisions are made on the upper arm and chest, from which considerable blood flows.

278 Poisons that work internally are not manufactured. The Auin maintain, however, that the arrow poison also works internally.

The manufacture of arrow poison was described above.

/159 cont./

278 752 [411] Poisoned arrows shot into the chest and abdomen are described as unconditionally deadly. Arrow wounds on extremities, as well as very superficial ones, are supposed to be curable under certain circumstances if immediate help is provided.

[751] There is no inoculation against arrow poison.

[827] An older Auin suffering from badly inflamed eyes attributed this illness to an arrow wound he had received many years earlier. His statement, of course, cannot be verified.

165 Malaria is endemic and annually exacts many lives. The number of cases resulting in death was especially great in 1908-1909. Whole settlements are supposed to have died out. Epidemics were unknown even to the "oldest people."

Venereal diseases are blessings of civilization, but evidently not yet widespread.

731 Famine actually prevails every year toward the end of the dry season, especially if the preceding rainy season has been poor. During this time, almost all the Auin are emaciated to skeletons. Death by hunger is not supposed to /160/ occur. After all, the Bushman always finds something to eat, even if it is only grass seeds.

●756 The so-called doctors decidedly possess great experience in medical matters, which, however, does not prevent them from practicing considerable charlatanism (see Section T).

W. Time Reckoning, Astonomy

805 The day is divided according to the position of the sun. Certain time segments are indicated with great exactitude according to the position of the sun. If one asks a Bushman, "How far is it to the watering place?" he will point to the place in the sky that the sun will have reached by the time one gets there.

The concept of the month is known (gnui, "month").

The relation of the solar year to lunar months is unknown.

The Auin divides up the year, for which, incidentally, he has no definite, but rather only a very vague concept, as follows:

[10 cont.]

539 X'ámabe X'ámabe X'ámabe X'ámabe God, God, God, God
782 /gami tara ai Water we can drink!
[821]
271
731 [11] In the waterless wilderness of the palm bush and the Otjimpolo Veld death from thirst often enough overtakes even the Bushmen, accustomed as they are to privation. They [488] do not deny that at times they are forced to leave the old and [758] the sick behind in the wilderness. But such an occurrence stays in the people's memory for a long time as a serious misfortune. Anyone who is acquainted with the Bushmen's love of children and veneration of parents and old people can understand what it means to them to be forced to leave behind one of their own.
271 One must have experienced personally the feeling that overcomes one when due to thirst and heat the body no longer gives off perspiration, the dry forehead feels burning hot, and a slight chill passes through the body, in order to understand this song of joy which seems so naïve, whose content is: We can drink again!

539 3. Short and fervent prayer at the beginning of a
782 journey:
[484] X'ámaba !Khu gai teve God, let me travel well.

[755] 4. Choral prayer for a sick person: When someone is gravely ill, the relatives sing in chorus, while the doctor performs his ceremonies.
X'ámaba !khoé-wa ≠khai kháira téve God, let our people rise again.

789 5. Not a real prayer, but rather a formula of exorcism is said to oneself when meeting a stranger regarded as evil:
Tshuai Kwewa /Nawa!

821 They do not know anything to say about the sun (sorésa). The moon (X'áwa) dies every month and wakes up again.

753 Illnesses are sent by X'amaba. He sends them to those
776 persons with whom he is angry. Other spirits have no role in this, and there is no spirit of sickness.

776 There is a host of little spirits, the /ga /ga hú, in the bush. They play tricks.

775 A human being has only one soul, !gaoba. This soul goes to heaven after death. (!nanu-aiba, rain house?) The house of X'amaba (≠khauba) is there. Only the doctors know [756] what it looks like up there. They speak with X'amaba.

/14 cont./

chronic, good-natured imbiber . . .

In heaven there is one god, Erob. Lightning (dábara) and rain (!nanus) are sent by him. He calls heaven X'ameiba. This word is very interesting. It can mean both "place of the /15/ souls (X'a) " or "place of the X'amab." The souls (um-ské) go to heaven after death. "This is what they say," said the man, "I haven't been there yet."

He did not know Gauab and Heiseb. Concerning other spirits, he said that people had mentioned them, but he did not believe in them. The spirits are supposedly called "gangarob." The old Bushmen had neither doctors nor medicines against illnesses. To my question about what made people ill, he responded with philosophical equanimity: "If one becomes ill, he is ill like an animal." He knew nothing about the sun (soris) and moon (X'ab). A sacred fire is unknown to him.

Of greatest interest is his report, undoubtedly based upon autopsy, concerning an initial offering at the hunt. I give the report in literal translation:

"Before people go out to the hunt, they meet at an omsati tree (//Khaia-aib). There a fire is made. Each hunter rips off a number of leaves, spits on them, and throws them into the fire as he shouts:

Érob, Érob, áu tere! God, God, help us!

"When the game has been killed, one first cuts a piece each from the lung, liver, and stomach and throws each piece singly to the side, saying all the while:

Érob úre, Érob úre! God take, God take!

"Then they start to eat."

This function is performed by the one who has killed the game.

The following was communicated to me concerning the social organization:

There are initiation ceremonies. The celebration of the first menstruation originally coincided with the wedding. On the first day of menstruation the girl went into a pontok especially constructed for this purpose. Then there was dancing for two or three days, and after the cessation of the menses the girl went to

[38 cont.]

412 Fig. 4. Wooden Mortars of the !Kung. (1/4 natural size [as shown
415 in the original text]).

Fig. 5. Wooden Vessels of the !Kung.

Fig. 6. Large Wooden Bowl of the !Kung (probably imported from the north — Museum of Ethnology, Berlin, III, D. 2158).

Fig. 7. Pestle and Digging Stick or the !Kung (greatly reduced).

Fig. 8. (1) Digging Stick with !Kwe; (2) Veld Hoe (Museum of Ethnology, Berlin, III, D. 1278 and 1497).

301 lengthen them. Some people possess such a great number of these chains that they cover the entire forehead. Children often wear small rectangular pendants, and women have large, medallion-like round ones that are worn like a diadem in the middle of the forehead. Little chains of small ostrich egg beads up to five centimeters long are worn as ear pendants. Children are also given armbands and anklebands made of ostrich egg beads. Brass beads from ancient times are rare and are worn exclusively as hair pendants, as are copper beads. Glass beads are not greatly valued, and only blue ones are worn, if any. On the other hand, beads made from aromatic wood are common. Longer chains of alternating wood and ostrich egg beads and worn in the hair are insignia of the female doctors. The men have tight little leather straps at the wrists and ankles, which probably serve to strengthen the musculature in running and using the bow. In addition, they have a few armbands of brass or iron. Every man and woman wears a string around the neck, which has one or two appetite sticks (see below) and various talismans attached at the front. Finally, a little horn containing various kinds of medicine is worn around the neck by many of the men. The younger women and girls usually also possess a tortoise shell powder box of the kind described below for the Dama. Body painting is scarcely practiced; concerning tattooing, see page 56. The children occasionally wear armbands that they make themselves with grass or various fruits.

[47 cont.]

752 burn the wounded person at many places on his body. When the poison smells the warmth, it gathers at these places; incisions are then made there, and the blood is sucked out by means of a cupping glass made of gemsbok horn. The wounded person may neither sit nor lie down; he must be walked about for twenty-four hours. After this time he either dies or is cured. The method helps only in rare cases.

Snakebite is the second great danger. If one makes an
751 incision in the lower part of the calf and rubs scrapings from a
824 bisob root into it, the snakes smell this and do not come out of
825 hiding. [Fig. 18 appears here.] When a person has to run great distances, bisob dust is mixed with fat and applied
752 to the legs. In case someone is nevertheless
(411) bitten by a snake, the treatment is analogous to that used for arrow wounds. Injuries to the feet caused by thorns are very common. Injuries that pass through the aponeurosis are regarded as deadly. They practically always become infected. Even though wound infections take a less malignant and a slower course than among Europeans, they nonetheless sometimes lead to death. The only medicine
(278) used is bisob powder scattered in the wound.

Fig. 18. Kirri of the !Kung.

752 Some doctors claimed to be immune
751 to snake and scorpion bites.

What Vedder observed among the Bergdama is reported in a similar manner by Schinz:

"With the intention of testing the latter characteristic, I one day persuaded an old sorcerer visiting us in Noi !as on Ngami Lake to undertake an experiment with 12 scorpions (Buthus randus Simon) picked out by myself and having an average length of eight centimeters. In order to prevent any possibility of deception, I put the animals on the various parts of his body with tweezers, on the hands, legs, arms, mouth, and testicles. As a rule they then immediately and excitedly moved the long postabdomen back and forth and jabbed violently once or twice into the flesh of the guinea

[47 cont.]

756 pig concerned, at which time in each case a large drop of white
751 fluid escaped from the stinger. Finally they moved about quietly without making any further attempts to sting, but they did not in any way show the excited hurry to get off the Bushman's body that has been reported by individual writers. The old man claimed not to feel any pain, and I have no reason to distrust him since, after all, if the poison had had any kind of effect upon him, he would scarcely have allowed himself to be stung in the most sensitive parts of his body for the sake of my desire for knowledge. Even a full hour after our experiment, the parts that had been stung did not show the slightest alteration. The man declared that he had attained this extraordinary faculty as a boy in the 'school' of a sorcerer, where he had been urged to apply scorpion poison, which had been taken forcibly and thinned with water and urine, on small incisions, as well as to eat the poisonous stingers pounded to a mash and boiled; supposedly immunity against snakebite can be obtained in like manner."

14. The Doctors' Test

755 One afternoon the eldest of the horde outside Keibeb came
756 to me and told me that that night a great dance would take place,
796 first, because a three-year-old child had just been bitten by a small black snake, second, because many people were sick with fever, and third, because one of the men wanted to undergo the doctors' test. Such festivals take place only during the time of the full moon. Toward nine o'clock in the evening I was lured into the camp by wild noise. The people had made somewhat larger and more fires than usual. The mother with the child bitten by the snake was seated in the center of an open semicircle. The older women squatted around her. To one side of them in single file, one behind each other, stood the younger women and girls. Both the male [48] and female doctors were busy. The chief female doctor, Biri, was "personally" absent this evening. She was crouching off to one side in the darkness of the bush. /Nawa,
[787] the highest of the //Gauab, had taken possession of her and spoke through her mouth. Her hair ornaments, long chains of beads made

[48 cont.]

755 from ostrich egg shells, had been put on by her proxy, Dube, a
●756 very intelligent young woman. The latter, standing at the end of
796 the semicircle of seated women, conducted the ceremony. She
[276] was in a very good mood and alternately smoked her Bushman
[554] pipe and my cigarettes. There is a kind of hierarchy among the women; those who were squatting were higher in rank than those who were standing. All the women clapped their hands and sang
[533] in a monotonous rhythm: ehe, ehe, ehe, ehe, etc. This, I was assured, was no song, but "music." Some hordes have bartered

[532]

Fig. 19. Sorcerer in a Bird Mask, Followed by Spirits of Sickness. (From Rock Paintings in South Africa. From Parts of the Eastern Province and Orange Free State. Copied by G. W. Stow. With an introduction and descriptive notes by Dorothea Bleek. London, Methuen, 1930.)

dance drums one and a half meters high from the Okawango, which on this occasion are played by men. [Fig. 19 appears
[184] here.] Among the Bushmen of the Sand Veld the female leader of the ceremony does not wear the ornaments of the chief female doctor; instead, the ornaments are hung on a tree. The position of the chief female doctor is not permanently held by one person; the chief doctor on occasion imparts supernatural powers to her.

755 The five doctors had taken off all their ornaments and
756 were naked except for the front apron. They put themselves
786 into an autohypnotic state by means of crowing, by producing
796

[48 cont.]

755 sounds similar to those of ventriloquists, and by certain muscle
●756 contractions. By pressing together the gluteal musculature of the
786 buttocks and at the same time holding the knee joints as far apart
796 as possible and pressing the legs together at the ankles, they eventually produced a tonic trembling cramp of the entire musculature of the lower extremity, in which they reeled back and forth. It is possible for anyone to put himself into an autohypnotic state in this way, as this author also learned from the doctors. Soon the rolled-up eyes indicated that the doctors were in a state of trance. They danced around one another, fell over one another, and lifted one another up. Some women also started making noise with the dance rattles. The Bushmen were now convinced that
[787] /Nawa himself was dancing among the doctors, was visible to them, and spoke with them. At this point they say something
[782] like prayers; they invoke the great spirit of the old Bushman who has killed many elephants; they call the spirits of the dead who have sent their little spirits of sickness over the living, and they especially beg /Nawa to transfer these little spirits of sickness to the doctors.

755 The doctors ran alternately to the bitten child and to
756 those ill with fever who squatted around the fire, stroking the
796 painful places, both from the armpits down to the soles and from the shoulders down to the fingertips. Occasionally they also sucked at the diseased spots or inhaled the breath from the mouths of the patients.

From time to time, the doctors performed these operations upon one another, first of all, as they said, in order to distribute the poisons of sickness equally among all the doctors, but also in order to obtain power from the other doctors. Thus "charged," the doctor then again ran to the patients to take their poison.

Now and then the chief doctor ran screaming around the
[787] line of standing women and [49] disappeared into the bush in order to ask the chief female doctor about the will of /Nawa. After about an hour's dancing the chief doctor went to the bitten child. The child had been bitten on the back, and this was rubbed with fat and then medicine; then all the patients were again subjected to the treatment described above, and soon thereafter /Nawa an-
[787] nounced through the mouth of the chief female doctor that the

[49 cont.]

[787] 755 756 796 child, and the other patients, too, would be cured. That ended the first part of the ceremony.

Now the doctors' test began. The others, with the exception of the women making music, participated only as spectators. The doctors went on dancing, often holding their arms stretched out to the sky, with the fingers spread apart, and then springing to the fire and holding their hands over it. Flinging the hands toward the sky is done to give some of the little spirits of sickness back to the chief spirit /Nawa, who passes up and down along a thread between heaven and earth. It is not a gesture of prayer. Similarly, holding the hands over the fire is intended to achieve the same result, because the "little spirits of sickness" do not like the fire and hence will go away. Meanwhile, they thank the great spirit for having saved the child. Then they prayed to /Nawa that he might concentrate all the little spirits of sickness on the [753] [761] doctors' candidate and kill him so that the people would be free of evil diseases, for the dying person takes the spirits of sickness with him. By brushing, rubbing, and blowing, the old doctors now transfer the spirits of sickness to the candidate. The latter is completely exhausted, collapses from time to time, is constantly lifted up again, and, staggering, he dances on, with foam appearing at his mouth. The other doctors taunt him: "You leopard, you lion, you elephant, you insurmountable mountain, you gigantically strong man, now you can't cope with the spirits of sickness we have given you." Once more the chief doctor runs to the former patient and transfers to the candidate any disease poison he may have gathered. This hellish spectacle lasted one and a half hours; then the chief doctor went to his oracle sitting in the bush and asserted that the candidate was too strong: we have concentrated all the little spirits of sickness upon him and prayed to the chief spirit that he might take (kill) him, but the candidate is stronger than the spirits of sickness. Nevertheless, the oracle commands: "Dance on." While this happened, a woman came out of the background -- in the half-dark I was unable to see whether or not it was the chief female doctor herself -- and busied herself around the cured child. She clapped her hands and beat her palms together, with the thumb sides in front of the child's face, and thus put even the child in a brief trance. The dancing continued until around midnight when the oracle finally declared that though the

[49 cont.]

755 chief spirit was not yet satisfied, she would appease him; the chief
756 spirit would voluntarily take the little spirits of sickness away, even
796 from the doctors. After these words the festival abruptly ended; the people went to their fires and lay down to sleep.

The candidate had passed his examination (1).

[184]
535
756
796

1. Burchell (in the translation by Hellwald, Völkerkunde [Ethnology], II, p. 519) has given a similar account from the south: "One foot remains stationary, while the other is in rapid and irregular motion without any definite change of position. The movement of the arms is so slight as to be negligible. At the same time the dancer sings without pause and keeps time with the movements. Occasionally he lowers his body and then suddenly raises it again, until finally he sinks to the ground exhausted, but still singing and rhythmically moving his body in time with the song of the spectators. Even though only one person dances at a time, the company present nonetheless also has something to do, etc."

756
786
789
796

When the excitement of the dance has reached its climax and the dancers have fallen into a kind of trance as a result of the continuous dance movement, the shrill singing, the drinking of coffee, and not least the tobacco smoke, which they keep in their mouths for minutes on end for the intoxicating effect, then the doctors, in order to demonstrate their resistance to fire, trample with bare feet on the red-hot embers taken from the campfire and spread out on the sand. In the case of a number of the younger ones, however, I believe that their resistance to fire was not quite as great as they would have one believe, and they carefully avoided the pieces that were

[49 cont.]

● 756 786 789 796 glowing all too brightly. On the other hand, I was surprised when on the occasion of such a religious dance the so-called great doctor -- after he had danced by himself long and continuously in visible ecstasy, so that in spite of the cool night and even though he was almost completely naked, the sweat ran down his entire body -- suddenly, with slow majestic steps, walked through the high flames of the fire and in so doing had to step on the burning logs with his bare feet.

753 776 [50] On a later occasion I discussed these procedures thoroughly and in detail with the chief doctor, Kasi, and with Dube and the other doctors. One of the most striking aspects of the entire ceremony is perhaps the absence of the mysterious and the magical. These little spirits of sickness are not magical creatures but, in the eyes of the Bushmen, commonplace realities. The Bushmen know very well that many illnesses are not caused by the spirits of sickness alone. If someone eats something that has gone bad, he will become ill and will be given an emetic. If someone is wounded by a shot, the wound will be treated. If the injured person has pains only in the wound and otherwise feels all right, then no spirit of sickness has entered into him. If he feels sick all over, however, then he is possessed by a spirit of sickness. These little spirits of sickness are called dsao; they are little yellow men with a fat belly and a little tail. They obey the other spirits, which, as described above, include the ordinary (775) spirits from the bodies of deceased persons, the spirits who live among the stars, and the chief spirit (/Nawa) himself. [Fig. 20 appears here.]

Finally, even the "great captain" can send the dsao directly over a person. /Nawa can do this with or without the consent of the "great captain"; the smaller spirits act on their own authority or at the command of these powers.

756 776 The doctors have their supernatural power directly from the "great capitain"; they are as powerful as /Nawa and stronger

[50 cont.]

756 776 than the smaller spirits. Their treatment is correspondingly successful or unsuccessful. In other words, the doctors are vindicated in any case.

755 757 The treatment of illness thus follows two parallel paths: one with natural means (medicines and the like), directed at the local symptoms of the ailment; and one with supernatural means, directed at the dsao that cause the feeling of sickness.

[756] [796] 539 During the doctors' test the following song is sung:

[411]

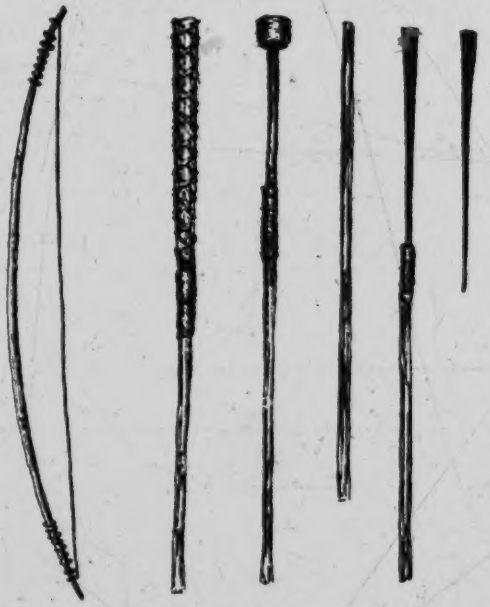

Fig. 20. Bushman Revolver of the !Kung (Foxhof; actual size [as shown in original text]).

e hehehe na ti //kau /goa dsao

During the treatment itself the following text is sung:

/o ma ga //goa ǂam /nai tha

He has no medicine yet, he must be
thrown with the medicine.

751 756 Von Zastrow and Vedder (1) have the following to report

1. Die Buschmänner, p. 424.

[50 cont.]

751 concerning the witch doctors:

756 [51] "The sorcerer can protect himself against the malignant spirits of evil deceased persons. After all, he can see them and knows the means for defending himself against them. The ordinary Bushman has no eye for them, but he has a means of keeping them at arm's length. In a small leather bag about as long as a finger [411] he keeps a bow carved out of horn and numerous horn arrows stuck in a shaft of sour grass [Cyperaceae]. If he has occasion to fear evil spirits, he shoots these miniature arrows in all directions with his miniature bow. Now the evil spirits cannot get at him.

"Since in addition he has the belief that an object merely thrown in the direction of a hated person in some mysterious fashion enters that person's body and gravely harms him, he likewise uses his miniature bow to keep a pursuer or enemy off his neck by shooting an arrow, with a curse, in the direction where he imagines his enemy to be, even when he knows that this person is miles away from him."

Whereas I myself and the highly experienced J. Lunkenbein 411 regard these Bushman revolvers as harmless magical instruments, [114] Seiner has a different opinion:

"The 'revolver' is a definite instrument of murder carried hidden in the modesty apron. The bow is ten centimeters long, the arrows are from ten to 12 centimeters long, and with the former they are put in a little bag adorned with beads. In addition it should be noted that the arrows, which are wrapped crosswise with little bands of tendon, are poisoned by being smeared with [278] little bits from the body of the arrow poison caterpillar. The Bushman ordinarily crushes a few of the caterpillars, which are available only in December and January, living on a few Commiphora shrubs (Commiphora dinteri, C. seineri) or as pupa at the roots under the ground, in a bone vessel with a little wooden stick that is always in the quivers; then he smears the arrow with some sticky stuff, such as wax or resin, whereupon he brushes the arrow with the viscous, slimy caterpillar mass, which, after drying, covers the arrow as a more or less thick brown crust. Up to a distance of seven meters it is possible to puncture the skin, drawing blood, with this miniature arrow; if the arrow tip were not blunt but pointed, like the one placed in the grass shaft, the arrow would

[51 cont.]

000 out the root, but dies on the spot as a sacrifice taking the place of the person who wants the plant. Once one has it, there is no longer any danger. People take so much trouble to get it because of its following peculiarity: the demons, that is to say, evil spirits of wicked human beings who enter into the living and kill them unless help is quickly given, are driven out by this plant as soon as one so much as brings it near the patient."

751 754 824 756 It comes from a little bush (/gui-sa). It does not occur in the Bushman region visited by me, but farther to the north. It is only found accidentally. When the doctor wanders through the bush, he sometimes hears low talking. Soon he sees a track resembling that of a snake and showing traces of blood. The root walks upright on this track, like a stick. He may not attack it, because he would die immediately; instead he attempts to approach from the direction in which the magic root is walking, opens the medicine bag, and lets the little mandrake walk in. Then the bag is firmly closed and at home is hung on a tall tree. The mandrake may not be taken into the hut. Something like blood drips out of the bag. Early the next morning a great fire is made; women and children and everyone assemble, each one bringing his little buck horn to obtain from the doctor some of the medicine coming from the mandrake. The medicine is rubbed on the skin. Bushmen who live among the Whites may not take this medicine because they will become sick from it. -- The medicine or the magic that is given out by the mandrake has little effect on those who were treated in the manner described above, [52] but it has considerable effect in other cases. This medicine is used to kill enemies through magic at a distance. When a doctor goes to a horde that does not yet have this medicine, he carries the horn filled with it around his neck. Some of the mandrake's magic poison passes into anyone who looks at him.

754 When the doctor sits down, anyone who has looked at him keels over and dies unless he is helped. If this person is an enemy, the doctor simply goes away and does not trouble himself any

[53 cont.]

751 burned to a tinder and pulverized to make a medicine. The per-
821 son struck now has incisions made on his tongue, forehead, cheeks, chest, and legs, into which fat is rubbed, and then this medicine is smeared on. Now, for the time being, he is safe from persecution by the rain.

16. Rain Magic

789 People turn directly to the great captain when they need
[786] rain. Not all doctors are able to procure rain, only the few who
796 enjoy the special favor of the great captain. Then a dance is organized, at which the doctors put themselves in the trance-state described below. At the same time the following lament is repeated countless times:

[54]

[539]

!garā̆ gurí dee oa ǂam	Why does it not rain?
X'uá dĕ rá /gaa !ái /gaa	Which lord is holding back the rain?
/gám khui hē̆	The sun is hot.
!kûng-ná gurí /gŏá /gŏá	Will man live?
//gauâna tani /gee ǂgáo	Are the spirits bringing winter?
!kung /goá hŏŏ !koa !kung ō dshn-ă̆	Where is man supposed to drink?
//gaa /a //gõĕ !kung /n̄ a //gõĕ	If it is so, can man only die of thirst?
!kunā̆ //gõĕ ne oa	What can man do now?
Ha-!kung tam hā̄ m tam ná /n̄ gĕĕ	We had better stay here because we have been abandoned!

756 Finally the great captain in heaven hears the lamenting.
789 The doctor runs from the dance place into the bush and sees that
787 a thin thread is let down from the sky. The doctor climbs up on
796 this thread. The great captain comes to meet him half way. As soon as the doctor sees the great captain, he throws a red powder (ocher with medicine) toward him. Now the great captain draws the doctor up and leads him to the heavenly house. In front of this house [Fig. 20 appears here] the doctor sees the spirits of
[775] his deceased colleagues who year in, year out, stand before the house.

[54 cont.]

756 789 787 796 house. The doctor then begins to pray: "Lord, help us, the children are dying, we are dying of thirst and hunger." He prays and begs until the captain says: "It is good, I shall send water so that the children will have water and veldkost." Then the great captain again accompanies the doctor halfway down. As soon as the doctor is down below, he lets go of the thread which is immediately drawn up. Now the people dance and sing, for the rain has come:

[539] /gǎ-é dsó-jā /gaa — We rejoice now over the rain.
//ē gā djusǎ !kho ǎdshója /ga — Then we rejoice all together.
//ē gā hin a /gaa /gaa — Then the rain comes.
da //goǎ dshn !gu da adschŏéa χ'u — Then the people praise the lord.

532]

Fig. 21. Spirits of the Dead and Rain Animal (from Bleek, Rock Paintings in South Africa etc., Pl. 58).

776 821 Another !Kung said to me: "The great captain in the sky sends the rain and all that comes from above. If he does not want to, everything remains shut up. The rain is opened up above; a great vlei is there. I do not know the name of the great captain. The Hei//om call him Som-seb."

17. Religion

771 177 After a critical look at the sum of the conceptions determining the religious life of the !Kung, one recognizes, as would naturally be expected in the case of such an ancient people, that the elements

[58 cont.]

775 From there they make their rounds. They always return to their
769 graves. Hence, a Bushman always makes a detour around a grave. He does not point at a grave with his finger, and he does not call to a companion: 'There is a grave!' A great detour is made around the area where there is a grave. When a Bushman unexpectedly passes a grave, he puts a stone on it. That is a greeting for the dead person. In so doing, one makes the grave more secure against wild animals."

769 From the region of Foxhof I have the following informa-
775 tion to add:

"The Gauab that arises from the flesh of the corpse remains seated by the grave. When a relative passes by and the Gauab is sitting out in the open, the Gauab thinks: I know this person well; why is he passing by here without giving me any water. Then the Gauab becomes angry and makes him sick. Then when the doctors sing, they recognize what the trouble is and say: Today you passed by the grave of N. and did not give anything. Tomorrow morning very early you must take water and
775 an ostrich egg and place them by the grave. Such a Gauab also
787 goes hunting, kills game, makes a fire, cuts open the game, takes the fat, and brings it to the doctors while they are singing.
[756] The Gauab, whom the other people cannot see, sits down at some distance from the dancers. The doctor sees him, however, and goes to the Gauab. The latter tells him where the game lies, and the doctor tells this to the other people, who fetch the game and praise the Gauab.

775 "The stars are the campfires of the Gauab.

"The Gauana take the souls that they have stolen to their village and then back to the grave. The people often hear a voice in the veld; this is the Gauab calling, and on their way they find a piece of dead game. When the Gauab is out hunting and has gone too far from his grave, he must sleep in a tree. Some of the souls stolen by the Gauab are brought to the captain of the Gauana. The souls that are taken there again become actual persons up above with the captain of the rain. The others, however, are the little Gauab who go hunting here."

[114] The observations made by Bleek (3) 50 years ago seem to
776 be especially significant.

3. W. H. J. Bleek and L.C.Lloyd,

[113]

[74 cont.]

776 one time as a man and at another time as a woman.

7. Medicine

757 The curing practices of the Nogau Bushmen are very primitive. They have nothing for snakebite and nothing for arrow poison.

278 Eland fat is a universal medicine. For the common eye inflammations this fat is smeared into the eye; for headaches warm eland fat is dripped into the ear; for a cold the nostrils and nose are smeared with eland fat.

753 [754] Sickness comes either from the evil head Gauab or from sorcerers. The ailment is caused by a little Gauab who has settled in the body. The more gravely ill a person is, the more Gauana have entered into him. The doctors are able to draw out these 755 756 spirits of sickness; they do it in a fashion analogous to that practiced by the !Kung. There are also female doctors.

753 776 The spirits of sickness are regarded here as much more material than among the !Kung; such a Gauab looks like a human being, but he may also appear as a lion, a wildebeest, or a snake. Once the Gauab has been drawn out of the body, it runs away and speaks to no one.

756 [825] The sorcerers in particular like to transform themselves into lions. Among the Bushmen farther north [75] it is supposedly the case that when they see a wildebeest in the bush, for example, it is not a wildebeest at all, but a Gauab. The doctors receive their power from the highest Gauab (/gaua //gaicha). He is the one who appears in the wind spouts. As among the Bantu, the doctors must go to school for several years with older colleagues. [754] They are not only able to cure, but also to practice magic in the bad sense, in that they induce /Gaua //gaicha to make ill anyone whom they want to harm.

"Whoever wants to become a sorcerer must go to school with another witch doctor. When someone is struck by lightning, it is said that Gauab struck him down with his knife. Some then become great doctors and often speak with Gauab. Gauab also comes as a wind spout."

[78 cont.]

000 it with the fingers. [Fig. 29 appears here.]

227 262 825 [79] The lion is neither eaten nor hunted. The jackal and leopard are eaten, as is the liver of the latter. Baboons are not eaten, because they were formerly Bushmen.

304 302 The line of tattooing between the eyebrows make people into leopards among the Nogau. The Naron smear themselves with red and black color. The other incisions and tattooing are made purely for adornment.

825 756 Among the Naron, millepedes are regarded as creatures of Hise, and only doctors may touch them and make medicine of them. Among the Nogau and ǂAuin there are magical bones 787 that are used to predict the future. The Naron also believe that [172] the rock engravings stem from //gauwa.

Among the Auin it is forbidden to eat hyena flesh, and 262 likewise the flesh of the shabrack jackal because it is a dog.

The following important data supplied by Gentz (1) should

227 [114] [113]

1. "Einige Beiträge zur Kenntnis der südwestafrikanischen Völkerschaften [Some Contributions to Knowledge of the Southwest African Tribes]," Globus, Vol. 83, 1903.

be added:

"I have repeatedly found Bushman arrows on which the point, usually made of bone (for the most part ostrich bone), was made of wood. The game sling, reproduced in Figure 29, is constructed as follows: A strong string, four to five millimeters thick, which at one end terminates in a simple loop, is fastened at the other end to a flexible young tree or branch that is bent far over. A small, thinner string with a transverse stick is attached at the loop end. The string is placed around a small post driven into the ground at an angle, and it is prevented from slipping off by means of a flat piece of wood buried under the ground and planted against the free end of the transverse stick; the sling is placed in a circle on the ground over the flat piece of wood. The game, which follows its customary track to the

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Dancers

WHEN Bushmen dance their medicine dances, the medicine 535 756
begins to work in the bodies of the medicine men. Medicine is warmed to potency as the exercise of dancing warms the shaman's body, and by the heat of the fire that the shaman dances around. The medicine purges evil and cures a sickness that is known to the Gikwe as "star sickness," a mysterious, magic sickness that has no tangible symptoms but together with evil is brought to people by the spirits of the dead. You can tell that powerful curing medicine is at work during one of these dances because the medicine men fall into trance, shudder and shriek and roll their eyes up into their heads, fall into the fire or wash their faces with flaming coals and are not burned, and when they rub their fire-warmed hands on you to cure you their hands are hot and dry and flutter like moths, and presently the star sickness leaves you, enters the bodies of the medicine men, and is shrieked into the air, hurled back to the spirits of the dead who brought it.

There are many types of medicine at work in the Kalahari, 756
and every band among the Gikwe, Kung, or any Bushman 825
nation possesses certain of these. Some bands, for instance,

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

have the giraffe, rain, and gemsbok medicine. Others might have the ratel, fire, and gemsbok medicine. Ukwane's band had the sun, dove, and gemsbok medicine. Almost every band has the gemsbok medicine, for magically the gemsbok are very important animals, obvious from the black medicine markings on a gemsbok's face.

The medicine songs are songs without words and are given to both Kung and Gikwe Bushmen by the great god who sends his messengers, the spirits of the dead, to a sleeping person. The spirits of the dead teach the person a medicine song in a dream, and when the person awakens he teaches the song to the other members of his band.

At dances, women sing the medicine songs, men dance and use the medicine to cure people, for almost all men are made medicine men when they are in their late teens, after they have been initiated into manhood, having shot their first buck. They are made medicine men by older medicine men, and although any Bushman man may become a medicine man, only certain of them find that they have strong healing power, and these are the ones who practice, who fall into trance at dances and chase evil from their people. Ukwane himself had been one of these. None of the people he cured ever died, he said, but as he grew old his powers seemed to leave him, so now he did not practice any more. In his band Gai became the strong healer.

Of course, a medicine dance is a great affair, for it usually takes place at night and lasts all night into the morning. Everyone in the band takes part, every young boy old enough to walk may dance, every young girl may sing with the women, and women themselves may dance if they feel inclined. People talk, eat, and smoke between dances, or go off to bed to sleep for a while, so, all in all, dances are social af-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

fairs as well as important curing ceremonies and might be called informal rituals, for everyone has a good time.

Underlying the gaiety and informality of a dance, however, is deep magic, taken very seriously by everyone, for using this magic is the way in which the Bushmen protect themselves from the dark forces in themselves and their country, the only way in which they can protect their lives from the evil of dissension, from thirst and starvation, from disease and death. In their dances the Bushmen defy the great god himself and his ominous messengers, the spirits of the dead.

To have a dance, the women sit in a circle with their babies asleep on their backs and sing the medicine songs in several parts with falsetto voices, clapping their hands in a sharp, staccato rhythm at counterpoint to the rhythm of their voices. Behind their backs the men dance one behind the other, circling slowly around, taking very short, pounding steps which are again at counterpoint to both the rhythms of the singing and the clapping. Now and then the men sing, too, in their deeper voices, and their dance rattles—rattles made from dry cocoons strung together with sinew cords and tied to their legs—add a sharp, high clatter like the sound of shaken gourds, very well timed because the men step accurately. A Bushman dance is an infinitely complicated pattern of voices and rhythm, an orchestra of bodies, making music that is infinitely varied and always precise.

It is with great care and effort that this perfection is achieved, for the people learn the songs and dances when they are children and work for perfection in skill and timing all their lives. Even the dance rattles are carefully tended, hung from tree branches to preserve their dryness, their sharp sound, and a great deal of labor goes into their making. Gai's pair of rattles, which swung in the wind from the branch that

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

534 shaded his dwelling, had about sixty cocoons on each rattle of the pair, and in each cocoon, from which the pupa had been carefully extracted and the cocoon closed up again, there were from ten to twenty fragments of ostrich eggshell, each fragment chipped to a uniform size and round. Each pair of rattles, of course, is expected to last a lifetime and more, and I'm sure that Gai's rattles were older than he.

621 578 756 533 The day before we left, Ukwane's band and the visitors from Okwa decided that since they were all together and in sufficient number, they would hold a dance. Perhaps it would purge the bad season or relieve the strain of jealousies they felt toward each other. Dances are usually held at night, but this time, out of consideration for us, they agreed to hold it during the day so that we could film it. We found a place which would be suitable for filming, helped gather sufficient wood because there would have to be a fire, no matter how hot the day was, and as we did all this the six young boys got more and more excited, tried on dance rattles, danced tight little circles around each other and tugged at the elbows of the adults, urging them to start.

756 535 533 Some of the women wanted to sing, others felt too hot, too tired, but the men walked among them encouraging them all. A dance is long, hot work for women, the pleasure of dancing being mostly for the men. At last Twikwe and Dasina went to the spot chosen for the dance and, sitting side by side at the fire, their backs to everybody, sang a few bars and began to talk, then sang a little more, joined now by Tsetchwe, who sat beside them and began to sing in earnest. All three of them looked so small down in the grass and set up such a loud noise singing—for in order to interest the other women they were shricking the song at the top of their voices—that they seemed like three tree frogs or three cicadas, hard to notice in the landscape but putting forth earsplitting songs.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

At last a few more women joined the singers and the singing mounted, the voices took on several parts. At last the men began to join, dancing toward the circle in twos and threes, moaning the song in their throats, leaning on long staffs, their coming heralded by the dry, loud staccato of their rattles.

The men came from different directions, and they stood so tall and danced so strongly, with their muscles standing out on their necks, that their coming was like the coming of bull antelope, they were so radiant of strength and tension, they were so lithe and male. They came together out of the trees and, without the slightest change of pace, arranged themselves around the dance circle, wheeling slowly, one after the other, and the dance began.

The air was hot, the sun was shining strongly, the fire was sending a shuddering cloud of heat around the dancers, and as the dancers moved almost imperceptibly faster and faster, Gai suddenly flung his arms into the air and with a piercing shriek crashed to the ground. He landed stiffly with a bounce, his head cracking. On the ground he writhed and groaned, and Ukwane pulled him by the arms to remove his body from the dance circle.

Gai was in deep trance. Ukwane was ministering to Gai's body because Gai's spirit had rushed away.

Bushmen say that when the medicine in a medicine man becomes stimulated by a dance, warmed by the fire and by the heat of the man's body, the man's spirit may leave him, causing his body to fall because there is nothing there to hold it up, and fly into the veld, where it seeks out the evil that is troubling people. Some medicine men in this way have seen the spirits of the dead, some have seen the great god. At another dance we once attended, one man's spirit rushed into the veld, where it came upon a pride of lions that had been

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

774 troubling the people by their constant presence and by their
● 756 deafening roars at night. The man's spirit spoke with the
535 lions, defied them, and ordered them away, and the lions did go; they troubled the people no longer.

786 When the spirit returns, the medicine man comes to him-
756 self, as Gai did presently. He stood up and ran into the veld,
535 gaining speed as he went. Far out in the veld he screamed, a shriek of definace, then turned and charged back toward the dance fire. He passed through the dance like a wind through dry leaves; the people ducked aside and shrank away from his feet, then settled together when he had gone by. Gai shrieked again, turned himself, and rushed back, charging bull-like toward the fire again; this time Ukwane seized his arms and though Gai plowed forward, Ukwane hung on, dragging behind with all his weight, until at last Gai fell headlong into the dance fire and his hair burst into flames.

Ukwane snatched him out and slapped out the fire in his hair, and Gai, his mouth open and his eyes quite wild, sparks still falling from his head like stars, strained against Ukwane's hands. At last he broke away.

784 In a moment he bent slowly over the fire and washed his
756 hands in the flames, then went to one of the women in the
535 circle of singers and, placing one hand on her chest, the other
783 on her back, shuddered and groaned as he sucked the evil from her, then straightened suddenly and shrieked the evil into the air. In this way Gai cured all the people, followed as he went by Ukwane, who now held Gai's arm to keep him upright. Before long, Gai had fallen again exhausted and was dragged by the ankles to a place in the shade.

786 I looked at him and saw that his eyes were closed, his eye-
756 lids puffed, and thought he seemed unconscious. His breath
535 came rasping through his mouth and nose, and his pulse, showing in "the heart's place," seemed very quick. But he

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Gikwe

was all right; no one paid any attention to him as they would have had he not been well. His baby came to watch him, though, and gazed down into his swollen face.

It was very hot. The dancers and the women singing steamed with perspiration, first becoming gold in color, then ash white as dust stuck to them. Soon the women felt that they had sung enough, their feelings showing clearly in the diminished vigor of their songs, until finally the singing faded out entirely and the dance stopped. The men complained, but the women would sing no more and presently everyone had drifted away, leaving only the children wheeling slowly around the track worn by the dancers' feet, dancing soberly, carefully, without music, and Gai, who now lay prone and forgotten in the dust, in the shade of a little tree.

Hours later, when even the children had wandered back to the werfs and had joined their parents, who were tired from the exercise and were taking afternoon naps, Gai came to himself once more; he sat up and wiped his face, got slowly to his feet, and walked slowly home to sleep, next to his wife beside their fire.

All the Bushmen were asleep but Twikwe. Some people lay on their backs with their arms shading their eyes, their mouths open, some on their bellies, their arms and legs sprawled. All the young boys except Giamakwe lay like puppies, tangled together in a knot of arms and legs, for even in sleep they would not be parted. Giamakwe slept at a little distance from the others on his side with his body bent backward into a U, his head almost touching his buttocks, as limp and supple as a young snake or a young cat that drapes over your hand. Even Nhwakwe was fast asleep, lying on his belly and using as his couch his father's body, his head on his father's chest. Both were deep in slumber, Nhwakwe snoring

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

also commonly used for any man (not a boy) older than the speaker when the speaker must avoid saying the name. The people address the gods as */nan* and *gaoxa* more commonly than as *n|iha*. We were told that they call the great god */nan* ' when he is good '.

It is interesting to know that the power of the great god, his omnipotence which he was so mysteriously able to create for himself, is called *gaoxa* and that the special potent ' spiritual ' medicine which the great god puts into the medicine men, the curing power, is also called *gaoxa*.

The /Kung often call the great god ' father ' especially in supplication, and plead that he succour his ' children ' and give them rain or good fortune in the hunt or whatever they may be asking for.

Nonabe is a term of great disrespect, a ' scolding ' term. When used for a human being it is a curse and a terrific insult. A man who felt himself greatly wronged by another and in violent anger would say of the man who wronged him, ' That *Nonabe*! ' But he would not say this to the man's face ' for if he did there might be a fight (so great is the insult). When he saw the man in person he would come in peace to him, not showing his anger '. *Nonabe* is used in blasphemy by the medicine men in trance, along with other insults when they are combating the gods and the *||ganwasi* in the medicine dances, demanding that they take away the evil they have brought.

The Fear of the Names

The Nyae Nyae /Kung ' fear ' (*koa*) to utter the names of the gods. The word 'means both' to be afraid of, as one is afraid of a mamba, and 'to respect and avoid', as one respects one's mother-in-law and avoids speaking to her and saying her name.

Children must strictly avoid saying any of the names of the gods. Old men and women need not observe an absolutely restrictive taboo in uttering the names, and may and do say them, but there seems to be an element of taboo (it is a ' death-thing ', they say) and fear of drawing attention to themselves. We were aware of their unwillingness to speak of religious matters early in our work and therefore waited until our relations were well established before questioning them. Our information was gathered for the most part in 1953 and 1955 at many different sessions with fifteen men and eight women informants who had proved to be reliable. Others joined the talks casually and when they wished to do so. Our informants declared themselves willing to teach me because I wished to know. Throughout the discussions people varied in the degree of caution and discretion with which they spoke the names. Sometimes we talked literally in whispers and usually at least in low voices, saying ' the one in the east ', ' the one in the west '. On one occasion /Ti/kay told me that my questions made him sick. He meant to claim, I ascertained, that he had an actual physical sensation such as a nervous twinge or slight nausea. The woman who first told me the name of the wife of the great god put her lips to my ear and whispered, barely audibly, ' *Huwadi* '. Next day, unfortunately, she had a high fever. She recovered, but the episode put an end to my trying to learn from her about the wives of the gods. /U, when someone was ill at Cho/ana, and she was filled with anxiety and longing to be home at Gautscha, made me promise not to say the names or ask any more questions, at least until we were all safely back.

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

are big doors on the ends and small doors on the sides. Our informants believe that all the *//ganwasi* (spirits of the dead) live on the lower floor, and that ≠*Gao/na* and his wife and children live on the upper floor. Although the house differs so much from a Bushman scherm, the /Kung use the same word for it, *choo*. No mortal has seen ≠*Gao/na*'s dwelling place, not even the greatest of medicine men. The old people were told about it, but how they were told is not known. When ≠*Gao/na* appears to the great medicine men he meets them somewhere else.

The image of the house accords with beliefs held by North-Western Bushmen as Schapera reports: 'But among certain of the North-Western Bushmen *Huwe* also dwells in a house in the sky where he receives the souls of the dead. This belief is apparently not found at all among the Hottentots, nor has it been recorded of the other Bushman tribes. It is also held, however, in what appears to be a far more elaborate form, by the Bergdama.'[1]

The image accords in several respects also with that of the Eastern Kung, whom Lebzelter describes, except that in the belief of the Eastern Kung the spirits of the dead live on the upper floor and ≠*Gao/na* on the lower.[2] The stone walls and the corrugated iron roof are the new elements, added as the Nyae Nyae /Kung visualize him in his present power, possessing and commanding all things.

Only exceptionally great medicine men see ≠*Gao/na*. If I understood correctly, this is not because he is generally invisible but because he comes near only to them. ≠*Gao/na* is 'wild', as an animal is 'wild', meaning 'keeping his distance'. He has so much power in him that he is dangerous. If he came into a werf his power might destroy it. Some of the medicine men said that ≠*Gao/na* would not come nearer than about a hundred yards, pointing to a tree to illustrate the distance. /Ti/kay, who claimed that he himself had never seen ≠*Gao/na*, said that even a big medicine man is apt to be frightened when he sees ≠*Gao/na* for the first time and might say, 'What does this man want? He is bad. I don't like him.' /Ti/kay continued, saying that even a *very* big medicine man, long in medicine, having seen ≠*Gao/na* many times, would still be frightened, but when sickness came and he was curing and was full of power, he would keep a 'tight heart' and take a stick and would rush at ≠*Gao/na* and hit him and yell, 'You sent a bad sickness. You must take it back.' And the sick person would get better. This is how all the medicine men habitually treat the lesser god and the spirits of the dead, whom they meet regularly at the medicine dances, but, as ≠*Gao/na* does not come to the medicine dances, the great medicine man would encounter him only under special circumstances and would indeed need all his courage.

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 397.

[2] 'This "supreme being" [*Huwe* or *Xu*] is regarded as anthropomorphic, he looks like a Bushman and he also speaks Kung. He lives in the sky in a house with two storeys, the lower of which is occupied by himself, his wife, whose name is unknown, and many children, while the upper is occupied, as already mentioned, by the souls of the dead (*xu*). In appearance this house is similar to the ordinary Bushman hut, although not quite the same, and its exterior is "hairy like a caterpillar." Honey, locusts, fat flies, and butterflies are found here in superabundance, and the "great captain" feeds upon these; the souls of the dead, however, merely sit around and eat nothing. *Xu* summons the magicians to their profession, and gives them supernatural powers; he is the lord over rain and lightning, as well as over the spirits, *//gauab*, and through the chief of the latter he sends good fortune in hunting or in the collection of veldkos. If anybody thinks or speaks evil of him, he punishes the evildoer with lightning; otherwise he takes no interest in the doings of his "Bushman children", except when somebody swears falsely by him, for the Kung have a regular oath in which they invoke him. He is prayed to by them in fixed form for rain, in case of severe illness, before going out hunting or before undertaking a dangerous journey' (ibid., p. 184).

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776 It was characteristic of the /Kung that none of the medicine men whom we knew
● 756 claimed to have seen ≠*Gao!na*. They were not great enough, they said. The /Kung
[156] do not wish to risk drawing upon themselves the invidious attention of mortals or the whimsical displeasure of the gods by setting themselves up noticeably before others. Some said that they had been told by their parents of only one great medicine man among their neighbouring bands who had seen ≠*Gao!na*. His name was Gao. He died long ago.

776 Although ≠*Gao!na* comes only to the great medicine men 'in the flesh', so to speak,
787 he appears to anyone in dreams and 'helps all his people'. A hunter said that
[224] ≠*Gao!na* stands beside one in one's dream and says, 'You have been walking and walking and you got nothing. Today I shall give you meat.' The hunter gets up and goes out on to the veld. He sees an animal and shoots it. ≠*Gao!na* may say, on the other hand, 'These days you will not find an animal even if you hunt'; and it will be the truth. He may tell you in a dream where to find honey in a tree or where to
[756 find an ant hill. He gives power to the medicine men in dreams and also medicine
533] songs. A medicine woman described vividly how he had taught her a medicine song which she then gave to her people. He stood beside her instructing her to sing the song over and over until she had learned it.

//*Gauwa*, The Lesser God

776 Among the Nyae Nyae /Kung the word //*Gauwa* has three interpretations. First,
[725] a //*gauwa* is the spirit of a dead person; the spirits of the dead in the plural are //*gauwasi*. Second, the Nyae Nyae /Kung, as we have said, call the children born to the gods 'little //*gauwasi*'. Third, they apply the name //*Gauwa* to both the great and the lesser god. It is one of the seven names they have in common. In the current beliefs of the Nyae Nyae /Kung there is not a being called //*Gauwa* who is a separate entity apart from the great and the lesser god.

Among other Bushmen and the Hottentots, //*Gauwa* was a being distinct from the other being who is variously named *Hishe*, *Huwe*, *Xu*, &c. As I interpret the present belief of the /Kung, the lesser god is that old, traditional //*Gauwa*. He has been transmuted, however, from the old image to a new one, as the old protagonist, ≠*Gao!na*, was transmuted into the great god. //*Gauwa*'s name has been attributed to the great god as the great god's names have been attributed to him. The two beings remain separate entities in the */gu!na–/guma* relationship.

I base the interpretation that the lesser god is the traditional //*Gauwa* on the facts that many of his attributes are the same as or similar to those of the traditional being and that I did not hear people use any other name for him but //*Gauwa* and did not once hear the name //*Gauwa* used for the great god when people spoke spontaneously of him, although they insisted that it was one of the seven names which the gods have in common.

Excerpts from Schapera indicate that //*Gauwa* was generally the destroyer. Vedder reports that the /Kung at Tsumeb expect only evil from him and think of him as opposed to *Huwe*. But Lebzelter's Eastern Kung believed that he was good as well as evil, that he helped hunters, and some thought he was the creator. 'He is everywhere and moves between heaven and earth on cords.'[1] By the Heikum also he was

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 188.

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thought to be the creator. ' The souls of the dead come to live with him, and he eats their hearts.'[1] Hottentots considered him to be wholly the destroyer, the black chief, opposed to *Tsui ǁGoab*, the creator and rain-giver. '. . . it is further said, by the Naman, that " *Tsui ǁGoab* lives in a beautiful heaven, and *ǁGamab* lives in a dark heaven quite separated from the heaven of *Tsui ǁGoab* ", while the Korana told Wuras that *Tsui ǁGoab* lived in the Red Sky and *ǁGamab* in the Black Sky.'[2]

ǁGauwa in past concepts was more independent than now but otherwise he preserves the same mingling of characteristics. He does both good and evil deeds, from man's point of view, with emphasis upon death-giving and evil-doing. He has now become subservient to the great god, *≠Gaoǀna*, a servant who carries out orders and does his master's work. He should always obey *≠Gaoǀna*, but he preserves considerable independence, nevertheless, and instigates his own affairs.

One of his works is to go about to see what is going on. ' He tells the old man in the east whatever he sees and hears. " These people are staying well, those are not so well ",' Gao Medicine said, and continued, ' He may say to the old man, " Let us help these people get some food." Or he may tell him that lightning is killing some people and ask, " What shall I do? " '

Gao Scarf told us, in effect, that one time *ǁGauwa* went to *≠Gaoǀna* and asked him for medicine. *≠Gaoǀna* was annoyed. He said, ' The medicine must stay with me. I am bigger than you.' *ǁGauwa* went away and did not ask any more until some time had passed. Then he went and asked again. *≠Gaoǀna* said, ' You bad, stupid fellow! You think you are clever but you are not. I am bigger than you. I have everything. You must come and ask me every time, but this time take the medicine and go and work with your Bushmen.' That is how *ǁGauwa*, as well as *≠Gaoǀna*, gives medicine to the medicine men.

ǁGauwa is a ' small man ', he has small sense, and he makes many mistakes. If someone is sick, when the medicine men at the curing dances see him lurking, they rush at him, give him a blow, and shout that he has brought the wrong medicine. ' Idiot! You have done wrong. You make me ashamed. Go away.' And *ǁGauwa* then runs away. Sometimes after his chastisement he comes back with the proper medicine to cure and the sick person recovers.

The /Kung associate *ǁGauwa* with whirlwinds as the other Bushman and Hottentot groups did. The /Kung call a whirlwind *ǁgauwa ≠a*, which means *ǁGauwa* smell. *≠A* is not an ordinary odour, which one can actually smell, and a whirlwind is not an ordinary wind, which is *maa*. The /Kung believe that a whirlwind is ' a death thing ', ' a fight '. *ǁGauwa* walks in the whirlwind and his smell is in it, and death is in it. If the wind passes over a person, the *≠a* goes into him, and he will get sick and die. The spirits of the dead, the *ǁgauwasi*, also come in the whirlwinds. One cannot see or hear *ǁGauwa* or the *ǁgauwasi* in the whirlwinds. There are no precautions one can take to protect oneself against them except to try to get away. Little ' dust devils ' played around us very frequently in the Kalahari, and often awesome black funnels of ashes formed in the veld fires and reached from the earth to the heavens. Sometimes white clouds condensed on their tops and we believe that we saw 'pillars of cloud by day' like those the children of Israel saw.

[1] Ibid., pp. 188–9. [2] Ibid., p. 389.

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776 ‖GAUWA'S *Dwelling and Appearance*

‖Gauwa lives in the western sky at the place where the sun sets. (Cf. *‖Gaunab* of the Hottentots living in a black sky and *Tsui ‖Goab* in a red sky, p. 239.) /Ti/kay said more than once that the lesser god lived in the east. That was what he remembered being told by the old people, he claimed. The other informants agreed, however, in many different interviews, that it was the other way, that the lesser god lived in the west, so I take that to be their current belief.

Some believe that *‖Gauwa* first lived in a hole, */ge*. He made the hole, one informant told us, by pushing the earth out with his head. The hole was like a spring-hare hole, but very big. There were two entrances; one faced toward the sunrise, one faced toward the sunset. *‖Gauwa* later made a house (*choo*). The house is tied together with wire and has poles made of iron. The house stands in a flat open space. It is built up off the ground, upon the iron poles which are stuck into the ground and rise up into the air. Informants said that ' when a person is sick with sore throat, the sickness [753 has been caused by those irons which stick into the air. If *‖Gauwa* does not like a ● 756] person he can hurt him with those irons. The " old man " (*≠Gao/na*) tells him the way he must hurt a person.' When the medicine men are in trance they go to that house. This is how they know what it is like. They go up by a cord which hangs down from the sky. (Cf. Lebzelter's account of the Eastern Kung who believe that *‖Gaunab* moves between heaven and earth on cords.)[1]

There are two trees near *‖Gauwa*'s house. They have names. Nothing else on the earth or in the sky bears those names, one informant told us. The name of the tree which is towards the north with respect to the other is */Gais*; the one towards the south is named */Dua*. The names mean nothing; they are ' just names '. */Gais* and */Dua* have smooth bark and large white flowers, no thorns, no nuts. I thought they might be like baobabs which have these characteristics, but they are not. They are more nearly like the camelthorn (which incidentally has two names, */gi* ' a respect name ' and */ana* ' a rough name ') but are not exactly like any tree on earth.

776 The medicine men see *‖Gauwa*. Only a very big medicine man, full of the power 756 which *≠Gao/na* had put into him, might see *≠Gao/na* himself, as we learned, but any of the medicine men can see *‖Gauwa*. /Ti/kay thought that because *‖Gauwa* was so [787 often sent by *≠Gao/na* as his messenger the medicine men all become familiar with him. Anyone may see *‖Gauwa* in dreams.

The image of *‖Gauwa* varies. The present image accords with tradition in some aspects. Whereas *≠Gao/na* is ' the tallest of the Bushmen ', *‖Gauwa* is short. He has the form of a man, and the colour yellow is associated with him (similar characteristics to those of Lebzelter's little yellow mannikins with thick bellies, the *dau*).[2] But individuals have their own interpretations. I am convinced that some of the [158 medicine men, Gao Medicine for one, really believe that they do see *‖Gauwa*. They see in the shadows among the trees and bushes objects which they interpret to be *‖Gauwa*, or they see the light of the veld fires between the branches, or some such phenomenon, or they have visions or hallucinations, perhaps while in trance. Some perhaps just imagine a form.

Demi, a medicine man in Band 12, saw *‖Gauwa* the night of the great dance at

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 188. [2] Ibid.

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Gam when four bands danced together. Demi was the smallest Bushman we had seen in the region. He was bedecked with many beads and walked with a prance like a bantam cock. He had seen *//Ganwa* in the darkness, he told us. He had confronted him and driven him off with imprecations and sticks. I asked him to tell me what *//Ganwa* looked like. *//Ganwa* is as big as a mouse and has legs like a mouse, he promptly told me, showing me a pipe about four inches long to demonstrate *//Ganwa*'s size. (Demi did not say *//Ganwa* was a mouse; he said ' as big as '.) *//Ganwa* is covered all over with short yellow hairs. This bright, prancing little man had seen a little god. None of the other medicine men saw *//Ganwa* as small as that.

Gao Scarf sees *//Ganwa* regularly. He is like a man in form, but not such as we. He is about two and a half feet tall. (Gao demonstrated with a stick.) He has yellow hair over his whole body. He does not speak as we speak. He says, ' *hu hu hu* ', like the medicine men when they are performing a ceremony, but softly. Only medicine men hear him and understand him.

Another Gao said that *//Ganwa* is about a foot tall and the colour of a wart hog. He has the form of a man.

When Gao Medicine is in trance, he often sees *//Ganwa*. He is a being about the height of a guinea-fowl, grey in colour like the bark of the ubiquitous camelthorn tree. But to Gao, *//Ganwa* is not clearly visible; he is like a mist.

/Ti/kay claimed to me that he was ' young in medicine ' and had never seen *//Ganwa*, as he had claimed that he had never seen *≠Gao/na*. This was an engaging torsion of the truth. I myself had many times seen /Ti/kay appear to confront *//Ganwa* during his curing. /Ti/kay was to me the most spectacular of all the medicine men in performing the ceremony. He did not fear to scream into the shadows, ' *Nonabe!* You have brought a bad medicine. It is going to kill someone. Take it back.' The people, I am sure, did not believe that he was ' young in medicine ' and that he did not see *//Ganwa* when the other medicine men did. /Ti/kay, as I think is apparent even in these brief accounts of him, was something of a deviant. I believe that he contradicted other informants because his nature habitually drove him to oppose others and that, at the same time, he deliberately and rationally tried to deceive me and lead me astray, first for one reason, then another. He was jealous of our harmonious relations with *≠*Toma and Gao Medicine. We were pleased and grateful to them when they would work with us and he refused, and this made him spiteful. Also, due to some influence which we do not know about, he may actually believe some of the things he told us, such as that *//Ganwa* lives in the east instead of the west. We were never certain about him.

The *//Gauwasi*

The Nyae Nyae /Kung believe strongly and vividly in the existence of spirits of the dead, the *//gauwasi*, who live immortal lives in the sky with *≠Gao/na*, doing his bidding. The *//gauwasi* come to earth and enter into the affairs of men when *≠Gao/na* so commands them. The /Kung fear them, pray to them to invoke their mercy or sympathy, exhort them in anger. The concept of having special relations with their own ancestors or of worshipping ancestors is lacking.

The people claim that they fear to speak of the *//gauwasi* lest they call attention to themselves or offend the spirits. They say it is a ' death thing to speak of them much ',

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The great creator receives the spirit, heart, and blood of the dead person and turns these elements into a *//ganwa*. To do this he makes a fire under the tree which grows in his werf, the tree for which we know no name. He puts a pot on the fire, and in this he boils medicines. Only he has these particular medicines. Men do not know their names. *≠Gao/na* then hangs the spirit, heart, and blood of the dead person in the tree. The tree itself is medicine. That is why the people fear it and why *≠Gao/na* hangs the spirits in it. The medicine smoke rises and blows around the dead person's spirit, heart, and blood, and they are transmuted into a *//ganwa*. *≠Gao/na* then smears the *//ganwa* with fat. This fat is not from an animal; it belongs only to *≠Gao/na* and is called */thoo*. *≠Gao/na* then takes the *//ganwa* to live with him in his house.

The *//ganwasi* have bodies which resemble those they had on earth except for their hair. We were told that their hair is changed from the Bushman's spirals to *≠Gao/na*'s hair, which is long, like a European's, but as black as a Bushman's. Only medicine men who have full medicine see the *//ganwasi*.

The *//ganwasi* eat food. As I understand it, they, like *≠Gao/na* and *//Ganwa*, eat the same foods that mortals eat, meat and veldkos, but they have their own supplies. They also are very fond of honey. They are said on occasion also to steal the veldkos of human beings from the places where they grow, and they sometimes change themselves into birds—not vultures, but smaller birds called */gwara*—and in this form come into the werf and eat the people's meat right where it hangs in the branches beside the scherms. The *//ganwasi* have their own implements, weapons, karosses, &c. They want nothing from men and there is no point in offering them things.

≠Gao/na gives the *//ganwasi* everlasting life. They grow older but, before they are very old, he rejuvenates them. He has a medicine for this which he does not give to men. Children who die remain children.

//Ganwasi keep their own spouses if they wish, and they live together but do not beget children. No great point was made of this. It was interesting to learn that, if a *//ganwa* tires of his wife and wants another, he may kill a living woman who attracts him, so, if a beautiful woman dies, one who is fresh and clean and wears fine ornaments, one could suspect that some *//ganwa* has taken her for himself. And a strong young hunter might be killed by a female *//ganwa* who wanted him. In spite of the power and dominance of the gods, the *//ganwasi* take things into their own hands sometimes.

No distinction is made between a good and a bad person when he dies. All go to the great god in the east and all become *//ganwasi* without differentiation in status or function. With the exception of suicide, no distinction is made either between a good and a bad death, such as is reported by Fourie of the Auen, according to Schapera: 'People who die a "good death" are said to go to */khutse*, those dying a "bad death" to *Gaue*. The former have a good time and live in plenty; the latter, on the other hand, often suffer hunger and distress.'[1] Among the Nyae Nyae /Kung suicides are said to stay with *//Ganwa* in the west. Burial also has no effect upon the status in the after-life—whether a person is buried properly bound in a deep round grave, or scratched into a shallow trench, or not buried at all and eaten by beasts.

The beliefs which we associate with ghosts—the haunting of graves or certain other places, appearing as spectres to persons, &c.—are not highly developed among the /Kung but are not entirely lacking. Three stories of *//ganwasi* haunting graves came

[1] Schapera, op. cit., p. 168.

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776 in demonstrating his supremacy and power would be a reason in keeping with the nature of one who said, 'I am *chi dole*.'

≠Gao/na is fortunately not a god of mighty wrath and vengeance. 'He does not get too angry,' ≠Toma remarked. 'That is why there are still people living on earth.' He and others who were present at our talk went on to point out again *≠Gao/na*'s benefactions, such as giving children, giving rain, and giving poison. One of his benefactions was poison, they said. He taught Bushmen how to put it on their arrows so that they could kill animals and eat, as the god of the black people gave cattle and the knowledge of growing crops so that his people could live.

Prayer

782 There are no priests among the /Kung and it is not the function of medicine men
● [756 to pray for the people or to lead them in prayer. Individuals frequently pray, how-
793] ever, spontaneously and alone. Anybody, everybody, may pray directly to *≠Gao/na*, to *‖Gauwa* or to the *‖gauwasi*, at any time or place, without assuming special posture or observing any other formalities.

The people say the words of their prayers silently to themselves, or they say them aloud, as though thinking aloud, but speaking directly to the gods. They may also speak to each other to be overheard by the gods. When men go to look for honey, they may pray to *Khwova/na*, the mother of the bees, to give them luck. Demi said, 'We talk to ourselves and she feels pity and leads us to the honey.'

The prayers seem very often to be in the form of questions which imply accusation—'Why do you do thus and so?'—but the people mean to plead mildly, without displaying anger. The blasphemy of the medicine men, usual when they are in trance, does not appear in the prayers. The people often use the respect terms but they also sometimes speak the names. There is no rule about which names shall be used. It is to be noted that they also say 'father' and refer to themselves as his children. They use the second or third person, one as readily as the other.

'*/Nau*, excuse this man and make him well.'

'Sympathize with me, */Nau*, because you are our *Gauxa*. Feel pity for me.'

'*≠Gao/na*, why have you made me grieve so? You gave me this person, why will you take him back? Favour me. Let this person live. If he dies, where shall I go?'

'*/Gara* has taken that person while we were still loving him. Why has he taken him?'

'You have created me and given me power to walk about and hunt. Why do you guide us so that we do not get animals?'

'*≠Gao/na*, when the women are walking in the veld looking for veldkos, let them find a dead animal. Shoot it for them with your bullet. Favour us.'

'Give rain. Wet the earth. Let there be veldkos. We are starving because we have to stay by the water-hole where there is no more veldkos. He has favoured some people with rain. Will he not favour us?'

'Please, our father, great man, will you send us rain?'

'Father (*mba*), why is it you help other people and do not help me to find food? We are all your sons. Help me too. I am the same as your other sons.'

'*Gani ga*, give us coolness.'

'Give us your water (rain). Give us a chance to rest. Give us food. We have nothing else if you do not give us food. Let food grow.'

'Why does *≠Gao/na* send lightning? Why does he destroy our houses with mad rain?

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The dancing of the men in the curing ceremonial dances has its own special style. In other dances, that of the *Choma*, the Men's Dance, the Eland Dance of the First Menstruation Ceremony, and in the numerous singing-dancing or rhythmic games which the /Kung play for fun, one sees enchanting pantomime and imitation of animals. In the ceremonial dances we sometimes thought we saw what might be a vestige of the imitation of animals' horns in the way the arms were held, but in comparison with the visual expressiveness of the games, the purpose is not to express by gesture but to produce sound, to be part of the music.

The men wear rattles made of strings of dried cocoons with little seeds or stones inside, which make a swishing sound. These are the only instruments used in the dance. (The /Kung, incidentally, have no drums.) The men dance with knees bent and bodies carried with little motion, leaning forward. On the strong accented beat, the dancer gives a hop and comes down with both feet. On the second beat he holds his weight on one foot (alternating right and left) and with the other stamps a single step or ripples two or three light stamps into the time of the single step. The steps are very precise. They are minute in size, advancing only two or three inches, but they are strongly stamped, and ten or twenty dancers stamping together produce a loud thud. The women clap loudly and sharply. The majority of them clap the basic pattern of a particular piece, while some strike a beat or beats which are complementary to the basic beat. The clapping and stamping are of such precision that they give the effect of a well-played battery of percussion instruments producing a solid structure of intricate rhythm. Above the percussion sounds, the voices of the men and women weave together in parts, singing the medicine songs.[1] Since singing and dancing are one, producing the music, I speak of medicine songs or medicine dances interchangeably.

The medicine songs or dances of the /Kung are named *Rain*, *Sun*, *Giraffe*, *Eland*, *Honey*, *Buffalo*, and *Mamba*. Some of the /Kung have *Gemsbok* and *Spider* Medicine music as well. The Rain Dance is not danced as a specific rain-making ceremony. The dances named for animals do not produce magic to control these animals in hunting or to prevent snake-bite, for example. The dances are named for these things because the things are vital, life-and-death things and they are strong, as the curing medicine in the music is strong.

After several dances have been danced the medicine men begin to cure. The /Kung do not have sorcerers, witches, or witch doctors, and do not believe that the divine beings enter into the medicine men or speak through them. Almost all the /Kung men are medicine men. They do not all choose to practise, for one reason or another, but there are always several in a band who are active. Medicine men receive no rewards other than their inner satisfactions and emotional release. I know that some of them feel a deep responsibility for the welfare of their people and great anxiety and concern if their curing fails, and a corresponding satisfaction if it prevails. Others of them appear to be less concerned about the people whom they try to cure and more inwardly turned.

When the medicine men are curing, all of them experience varying degrees of self-induced trance, which includes a period of frenzy and a period of semi-

[1] Nicholas England is in the process of tracing the songs and analysing the music, and he has a paper in preparation which will include /Kung beliefs and practices about them.

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consciousness or deep unconsciousness.[1] They may become stiff or froth at the mouth or lie still as if in coma. Some of them habitually remain in trance only a short time, others for hours. One man used to remain in a semi-trance for most of the day following a dance.

A Bushman curing cannot be fully described in words; it must be heard and I give only an outline here. The medicine man begins by dancing and singing with the others whatever medicine song is being sung. He then leaves the line of dancing men and leans, still singing, over the person he is going to cure. He places one hand on the person's chest, one on his or her back, and flutters his hands. The /Kung believe that in this way he draws the sickness, real or potential, out of the person through his own arms into himself. He grunts with shuddering, gurgling, gasping grunts which intensify in tempo and pitch into shrieks and reach a high, piercing, quavering yell. Finally the medicine man throws up his arms to cast the sickness out, hurling it into the darkness back to *//Gauwa* or the *//gauwasi*, with a sharp yelping cry of ' *Kai Kai Kai* '. This shows that it is heavy work to draw the sickness out. The effect of the sound on one observer, myself, was striking—gooseflesh and a stopping of the breath which made it seem as though the heart stood still an instant. A medicine man goes to every person present, leaning over each to cure, even the babies, who, amazingly, seldom cry, though he gurgles and gasps right into their ears. If someone is actually sick, he returns to him again and again through the night.

After the curing has been going on for some time, medicine men begin to reach their state of frenzy. They no longer go around to the people, their spasms of grunting and shrieking become more frequent and violent, their stomachs heave, they stagger and sway. They rush to the fire, trample it, pick up the coals, set fire to their hair. Fire activates the medicine in them. People hold them to keep them from falling and beat out the flames. They rush out into the darkness, where *//Gauwa* and the *//gauwasi* are lurking. They hurl burning sticks and swear at them.[2] ' Filthy face! Take away the sickness you have brought.' ' Uncovered penis[2]! You are bad. You want to kill us. Go away.' ' *Hishe*, you are a liar. This man will not die.' At this point they may fall into deep unconsciousness or sink down semi-conscious, eyes closed, unable to walk.

The medicine men who have not reached their full frenzy or who have passed through it attend those who are in it. The /Kung believe that at such a time the medicine man's spirit leaves his body and goes out to meet *//Gauwa* and the *//gauwasi*. They call this ' half death '. It is a dangerous time and the man's body must be watched over and kept warm. The medicine men lean over the one who is in trance. They

[1] ' The /Kung know about the drug called dagga. They told us that it grows in B.P. and that when they go to trade they sometimes get a little. They like to have some when they go hunting; it keeps one from feeling tired or discouraged, they say. They might take some at a dance if they had it, but they are not dependent on it or on any other substance to induce trance. The trances are psychologically induced.

[2] /Kung men swear a great deal. The swearing plays always upon the themes of the genital organs, sexual intercourse, incest, and excrement. In deprecation they call each other genital organs or tell each other to go and commit incest with their mothers, sisters, wives' mothers, or sons' wives. We have not recorded their saying ' daughter '. Is that thought so terrible to them that its expression is beyond even these hardened swearers? They use the same themes in their blasphemy against the gods. ' Uncovered ' or ' thrown-away penis ' may mean ' circumcised '. This is a great insult among the /Kung who do not circumcise but know that the Bantu do. ' Filthy face ' means ' covered with excrement '.

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

776 gods, the !Kung fear to do so because it displeases the gods and draws their attention and they say, "Who is calling my name?"

The lesser god who lives in the western sky is the namesake of the great god, who, as the belief goes, gave the lesser god all seven of his own divine names, but not his human name. Although they insist in this belief, the !Kung never used any name but *//Gauwa*, one of the seven divine names, when they referred to the lesser god and we never heard them [171] actually use this name for the great god. It would seem, then, that the lesser god is the old evil spirit, *//Gauwa*, who appears in the beliefs of the Hottentots and other Bushman language groups as the destroyer and the black chief, the one who sends death, disease, and misfortune. This evil spirit was an entity distinct from the good spirit who was variously named by Bushman groups *Hishe*, *Huwe*, and so on.

In present !Kung belief, however, neither the great god nor the lesser god is all evil or all good. Both are capable of being pleased or displeased with man and of sending favors or misfortunes. The lesser god is subservient to the great god and is supposed to do his bidding. The lesser god, however, has his own entity and does instigate his own actions, sometimes even disobeying the great god. Often they disagree between themselves.

The great god looks like a man, like a Bushman, but he is "the tallest of the Bushmen" and has long black hair that is not twisted and knotted like Bushman hair. He rides a horse across the sky—you can hear him—and he has a gun as well as bows and arrows. Some say he never comes to earth but always sends *//Gauwa*, or the spirits of the dead, the *//gauwasi*, [178] to bring the good or evil that he sends to men. Only the greatest of medicine men have ever seen him.

//Gauwa, however, is commonly seen by the medicine men. They describe him as small. One said he was about two feet tall; another, that he was as small as a guinea fowl; a third, that he was as small as a mouse. Several agreed that he was covered with yellow hairs. One, however, a humble man, said that while in trance he had seen *//Gauwa* and that he was like a gray mist.

782 RELIGIOUS PRACTICES • The !Kung say that they pray spontaneously to the gods. Whenever the thought comes to them they put their prayers into words and say or think them to themselves without any formality. When they speak in prayer to the great god they address him by the respectful term */Nau*, used for any old man, or use a title *Gaoxa* (chief), or call him "father." Sometimes they use one of his names. The prayers, a mingling [181] of mild imprecation and pleading, reveal the major concerns of the !Kung: hunger, sickness, and death.[11]

776 753 778 755 The great god, responsible for sending sickness and death to men, also created and gives to men a mystical curing power that is called *gaoxa*

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

(the same word as the title of respect). The !Kung say it is strong medicine: */num*. The !Kung take for granted his giving to man both sickness and the power to cure it, and account for the power's sometimes failing to cure by saying that the all-powerful god allows it to work, or not, according to his pleasure.

He gives the curing power to medicine men (called *num kxao*, medicine owners), appearing to them (usually in dreams, sometimes in what seem to be waking hallucinations) and putting the power into them. He has also put a curing power in the medicine songs that the people sing at the dances, songs named Rain, Sun, Giraffe, Eland, Honey, Buffalo, Mamba, and Spider —all powerful things. The great god gives the power freely. It is rare to find a man among the !Kung who is not a medicine man. The function of the medicine men is only to cure. They are not sorcerers or witch doctors. (The !Kung are not a witch-ridden people.) !Kung medicine men receive no rewards or special prerogatives. They work together apparently without rivalry. The medicine men may cure at any time but their strongest curing occurs at the dance.

Whether or not anyone is sick, the people dance two or three times a month, sometimes more often. Anyone who wants a dance may start one simply by asking people to come and begin. The !Kung like to dance for many reasons. There is the inherent physical pleasure in moving to rhythm. Music and dancing are their arts, from which their aesthetic pleasure comes. The dances are also social gatherings in which all participate, men, women, children, visitors—everybody. A dance draws them together as nothing else does. Even more important is the fact that the dance is one concerted religious act of the !Kung and brings people into such unison that they become like an organic being.

At the dances not only may the sick be cured, but pending evil and misfortune averted. The !Kung believe that the great god may send */Gauwa* or the */gauwasi* at any time with ill for someone and that these beings may be lurking, awaiting their chance to inflict it. The medicine men in the dances combat them, drive them away, and protect the people.

Usually there are several medicine men performing at the same time. To cure they go into trance, which varies in depth as the ceremony proceeds. The curing cannot be described in words; it must be heard. When a man begins, he leaves the line of dancing men and, still singing, leans over the person he is going to cure, going eventually to every person present, even the infants. He places one hand on the person's chest, one on his or her back, and flutters his hands. The !Kung believe that in this way he draws the sickness, real or potential, out of the person through his own arms into himself. To demonstrate that this is in fact going on and is hard to do, he grunts with shuddering grunts that intensify in tempo and pitch into shrieks and reach a high piercing, quavering yell. Finally, the medicine man throws up his arms

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date)1930
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184 304 881 During her seclusion a row of small parallel cuts, which are all blackened with ashes, is made on her face, or arms, or legs by her father or a male magician. Miss Bleek is convinced that these cuts are partly for ornament, but adds that there also appears to be a [776] religious element present, as one woman informant said that *//güüa*, a supernatural personage, leads this dance, and that the cuts are made in his honour.[1] Both the scarifications and the presence of a supernatural being are foreign to the puberty ceremonies for girls in other Bushman tribes; but, as will be seen shortly, both occur (in somewhat different form) in the puberty ceremonies for boys among the North-Western tribes.

184 681 In all the ceremonies so far described, girls are required to pass through the rites individually as soon as they have their first period. Among the Hiechware of the Eastern Kalahari, however, it appears from the very fragmentary data supplied by Dornan that girls are initiated in groups. The central feature of the ceremony, as described [304] by him, is an operation performed on each of the girls, which consists in the "perforation of the clitoris" (*sic*) with a stone knife, the operators being the older women.[2] If this information be correct, [177] we have here a ceremony in every way distinct from those of the other Bushmen, and one which can only be regarded as having been borrowed from the neighbouring BeChwana, whose puberty ceremonies for girls are of a somewhat similar nature.

Boys' Puberty Ceremonies

881 Boys are subjected to the ceremony of initiation after reaching the age of puberty, and as soon as they are considered to have become proficient in hunting, especially in the pursuit of big game. Among the North-Western tribes this ceremony is carried out in a secluded spot in the bush, near which no woman may come.[3] Here all the eligible big boys from several neighbouring encampments are taken ● [756] by the old men, with a couple of magicians in charge; and here they remain for about a month, living together in a big hut or enclosure. During the first few days they are roughly handled and half-starved;

[1] D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 51; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 122.
[2] Dornan, *Pygmies and Bushmen*, 159.
[3] Passarge, op. cit., 100–1; Kaufmann, op. cit., 157; D. F. Bleek, *The Naron*, 23–5; *idem*, [114] "Buschmänner von Angola," 122; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 51; Fourie, op. cit., 91–2. Passarge states that the ceremony takes place during the dry season, i.e. at the coldest time of the year; Fourie, on the other hand, that it is always held during the rainy season, when food is plentiful. The other writers do not mention the time of year.

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Division of Labour

In the manufacture of these different utensils, implements, and garments, as well as in the collection of food, there is no division of labour within the band save as between the two sexes. Every man is expected to be able to hunt, to make bows and arrows, and to do all the other things that are done by men; and in the same way every woman is expected to do the work recognized as pertaining to women. Some women, it is true, are more clever and industrious than others in making beads, some men better at hunting or at twisting rope and boring pipes, but all know how these things are done and none devotes his life to any one of them exclusively. The only special occupation is that of the magician, who in addition to having religious and magical functions is also the physician, but otherwise even he lives and works as do the rest, getting a few presents for his occasional services.

The division of labour between the sexes is clearly marked. A man hunts and snares game, fishes, collects veldkos as the opportunity arises while he is out hunting, prepares skins, makes the clothing for himself and his family, makes his own weapons, arrow-poison, firesticks, and other implements, twists rope, manufactures the larger wooden vessels and other utensils, makes fire, and occasionally assists the women in fetching wood and water. A woman builds the hut for her family, gathers veldkos and prepares the food, fetches wood and water, maintains the fire, makes her own ornaments, and is also responsible for keeping the camp clean.

Among the Auen the beginnings of specialized labour are found in that certain men work in iron, i.e. make spear and arrow heads and other implements out of any pieces of iron they can obtain. The production of raw iron from the ore is unknown to all the Bushmen, who, as a rule, obtain whatever iron they use by barter from the neighbouring Bantu peoples. Among the !O Kung of Angola a further division of labour was found by Miss Bleek in a group at Rusembu, where only the good shots went hunting, while other men worked in iron, and another appeared to be the trader and honey gatherer.[1] But specialization of this kind is quite exceptional in Bushman life.

Trade

Although the Bushmen are thus able to draw from the resources of their environment almost everything they really need, economically

[1] Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 153; D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 55.

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Ko ('ngo), as

776 we have already seen, comes sometimes to the people while they are
[787] dancing, and informs them where game is to be procured; while
[224] if she breathes upon a man's arm this makes him shoot better.[1]

From these accounts we may gather that the Mantis among the Basutoland Bushmen is regarded as the creator of all things, and is
[782] especially concerned with the sources of food supply, so that prayers are addressed to him for food, for success in hunting, etc. He is also linked up with certain dances in some way connected with
[756] initiation, although, from the description given by Orpen's informant,
[791] it is probable that the "initiated" men referred to are the magicians, who are also the physicians in all Bushman tribes. The tales recorded
[773] by Orpen show that the Mantis here has much the same mythological character as among the Cape Bushmen. The latter, however, do
[184] not pray to him, although by them also he is said to have creative powers and to have made certain game animals which are under his special protection.

184 Further north there are no particular beliefs about the Mantis.
776 Some Kung youths from near Lake Ngami, however, repeated to Miss Lloyd several tales about */xwe*, a little personage not identified with any animal, who plays tricks and transforms himself into a variety of things. */xwe* also has some dealings with the Moon and the Hare, outstanding figures of Bushman lore. He seems to have much in common with the Mantis, but there is no further mention of him in the other branches of the Kung or in any of the other North-Western tribes.[2]

776 The Naron and Auen at Sandfontein spoke to Miss Bleek about *Hishe* or *Hiyesha*, a supernatural being who lived in the east, and
[88] who, as we have already seen, appears in various guises at the boys' puberty ceremonies. He is regarded as the protector of the game and hunting; he once, when the trees and animals were people, bade them assume their present forms; he also instituted marriage and the mode of life of the Bushmen, Hottentots, and Europeans.
[756] From a casual reference by Miss Bleek it further appears that the magicians "worked" with Hishe, but unfortunately she throws
[114] no light at all upon the meaning of this statement.

177 From the Hottentots these people were beginning to borrow the
776 idea of */khuba* or */xuba* (cf. Campbell's "Goba"). This is the

[1] Campbell, *Second Journey into S. Africa*, ii, 32–3; Arbousset, *Relation d'un Voyage*, etc., 501, 505–6; Orpen, "Mythology of the Maluti Bushmen," *passim*.
[2] Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 404–13.

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776 "the Lord" or "the great captain", whom he identifies with Vedder's *Huwu* or *Hu'e*. This "supreme being" is regarded as anthropomorphic, he looks like a Bushman and he also speaks Kung. He lives in the sky in a house with two storeys, the lower of which is occupied by himself, his wife, whose name is unknown, and many children, while the upper is occupied, as already mentioned, by the souls of the dead (*xa*). In appearance this house is similar to the ordinary Bushman hut, although not quite the same, and its exterior is "hairy like a caterpillar". Honey, locusts, fat flies, and butterflies [825] are found here in superabundance, and the "great captain" feeds [775] upon these; the souls of the dead, however, merely sit around and eat nothing. *Xu* summons the magicians to their profession, and [756] gives them supernatural powers; he is the lord over rain and lightning, as well as over the spirits, *//gauab*, and through the chief of the latter he sends good fortune in hunting or in the collection of veldkos. If anybody thinks or speaks evil of him, he punishes the evildoer with lightning; otherwise he takes no interest in the doings of his [782] "Bushman children", except when somebody swears falsely by him, for the Kung have a regular oath in which they invoke him. He is prayed to by them in fixed form for rain, in case of severe illness, before going out hunting or before undertaking a dangerous journey.[1]

The Western Kung of Ukuanyama (Oschimpoloveld) speak of [184] *Erob*, translated by Lebzelter as "God", who, like *Xu*, lives in a house in the sky to which the souls of the dead are brought. He is [782] often prayed to, especially for rain and in hunting, as well as in case [224] of illness, "because he has made all things and can do everything and knows everything", and he is given the first offerings of the [821] chase. The rain comes at his command as a mist out of the earth, and then falls down, thereupon making thunder and lightning.[2]

821 184 776 [782] *Erob* also figures as the "supreme being" among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan, although in prayers for rain and in case of illness he is addressed as *Xu*. The group in North-Eastern Ondonga speak of the "supreme being" as *Xamaba*, the groups at Ukuambi know him as *Erob* or *Xuwa*, and the group at Uukualuthi as *Erob*; and among them all, as among the Eastern Kung, he lives in the sky in a house to which the souls of the dead are brought. Almost

[1] "Religiösen Vorstellungen der //*Kaun*-Buschmänner," 407-9; *idem*, "Bei den !Kuh-Buschleuten," 15.
[2] "Religiösen Vorstellungen," 412.

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while those dying a "good death" go to */khutse* (*/khuba*). "About the nature of these beings," he adds, "they have no idea, nor are their lives and activities influenced to any extent by them." But he records a tale in which the knowledge of magic by the Bushmen is ascribed to *Gaua*, who initiated one of them "on the other side" into the use of the small magic quiver (cf. below "Magic and Magicians"), while in his description of the boys' puberty ceremonies he speaks as if *Gaua* were the supernatural being figuring in them, whereas Miss Bleek's informants all mentioned *Hishe*.[1]

Vedder, again, says of the Kung at Tsumeb that they believe in *//gaua*, who is opposed to *Huwe*, and from whom they expect only evil. They protect themselves against him by means of amulets. The !O Kung of Angola ascribe thunder and lightning to *//gaua*. When it thunders, they say "*//gaua* thunders", and when anyone is struck by lightning, a frequent occurrence, the death is related in the words: "*//gaua* took him or her." Two aunts of Miss Bleek's informant who had been killed by lightning were said to sit in the sky as stars. All stars are called *//gaua's* fires; there do not seem to be any separate names for them. *//gaua* also leads the people at a girl's puberty dance, and the cuts made on the girl's body are said to be in his honour. The same informant, a female magician, said that the Bushmen were *//gaua's* children. He is a male being who comes in from the forest, where his dwelling is a hole in the ground, and magicians can see it from afar. But people do not pray to him. This was also stated by a male informant, who said *//gaua* was *Ndzambi* (the Mbunda word for deity, used by the missionaries for "God"); "we pray to sun, moon, and stars," he added, "but not to *//gaua*."[2]

Much new light is thrown upon the conception of *//gaua* by Lebzelter's accounts of the spirit world among the Kung and the Heikum. Among the Eastern Kung, he says, the "great captain" *Xu* is also the lord of all the spirits, *//gauab*, to whom he entrusts all dealings with mankind, except in the matter of rain, over which he himself directly presides. These spirits affect human life both helpfully and harmfully. They can be seen and spoken to by the magicians, and look like men, but many of them are lame. They are not classified systematically by the Kung, but Lebzelter claims to recognize five kinds.

[1] D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 26, 46; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 104.
[2] Vedder, op. cit., 6, 7; D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 54; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 133–4.

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First there is their chief or headman, simply termed *//gauab* by ordinary people, but whose real name, known to and uttered only by the magicians, is */nawa*. "Probably," suggests Lebzelter, "we have to do here with the high god of another religion, and */nawa* is to be identified with *//nwa-se*, the New Moon of the Angola Kung." */nawa* or *//gauab* does good as well as evil. He is prayed to for success in the chase, assists the hunters in their efforts, and receives the first-offerings of any game taken; he is also, however, most frequently the cause of illness. One informant, who had been baptized, spoke of him as the "devil" who had made the Kung; others, old magicians, credited him with giving rise to the existence and present mode of life of men and animals. He is everywhere and moves between heaven and earth on cords.

The second group of spirits are the *//gauab* who stand at the service of the "great captain". As a rule they lie around their hearth-fires in the sky, the stars, and only come down to earth to steal the souls of the dead (*xa*) and bring them to *Xu*. The third group comprises the "small" *//gauab*, the ghosts of the dead, whose home is the grave but who roam about everywhere and are injurious to mankind; the fourth are the particularly malicious little spirits dwelling in the water; and finally there is the whole horde of the spirits of disease, the *dsao*, small yellow mannikins with thick bellies, who at the command of any of the other spirits enter into people and thus make them ill. It is the function of the magicians to remove them from the body of the patient.[1]

The Western Kung of the Oschimpoloveld have no such elaborate world of spirits. Mention is made only of the */gagorob* or */gau/gorob*, small spirits who roam about in the bush and do nothing but play practical jokes on people. "They are not the spirits of the dead," says Lebzelter, "and cannot therefore be compared with the *//gauab*."[2]

Among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan we meet again with *//gauab*, or, as the name is here rendered, */gamab*. Owing to Christian influence */gamab* is now spoken of as "the devil", but Lebzelter regards this being as a "demiurge", whom he equates with */nawa* or the principal *//gauab* of the Eastern Kung, and with */gamab* of the Bergdama and Nama. */gamab* is said by the Heikum to have created mankind and the world; the souls of the dead (*darish*) come to live with him,

[1] "Religiösen Vorstellungen der /'*Kkun*-Buschmänner," 407–10; *idem*, "Bei den !Kuñ-Buschleuten," 15.
[2] "Religiösen Vorstellungen usw.," 412.

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and he eats their hearts; he has forbidden people to eat the hare and the ostrich; he makes thunder and lightning; and the stars are his hearth-fire. Often he takes a star and throws it at a man, then the latter dies—a belief held in slightly different form by the Eastern Kung also, who regard a shooting star as foreboding the death of someone. Mention is further made of the "Saviour" or bringer of blessings ("Heilbringer") *Heiseb* or *Iseb*, to whom belongs the "benefactress" *Ises*, who gave the bow and arrow to mankind.[1]

The name */gamab* is also found among the Heikum of North-East Ondonga under the form *xamaba*. Here, however, Lebzelter speaks of *xamaba* as "the Supreme Being" who has made all things, including mankind, and who sends the rain. He is prayed to for rain, before a journey is undertaken, and in case of illness; he receives the souls of the dead in his house in the sky; he can be spoken to by the magicians, and he inflicts illness upon people whom he does not like. There is also an "evil spirit" *Heiseb*, "from whom comes the fire"; while in the bush there are said to be hobgoblins, */ga/ga hu*, but none of Lebzelter's informants had seen them, and their existence was doubted.[2]

In the Eastern Kalahari, again, *Huwe* and sometimes *Thora* are, according to Dornan, engaged in a contest with an "evil spirit" variously known as *Gaua*, *Khauna*, or *Gauna*. He is the destroyer, the one who sends bad luck and disease, and is ever on the look-out to injure people. The Bushmen invoke the aid of *Thora* to defeat his attempts to injure them. He sends the thunderstorm and the lightning, of which the people are very much afraid; they will mutter to themselves, *Khauna ka rue ie ie*, "Khauna leave us alone." They look upon the lightning as his offspring, nor will they kill the lightning bird or hammerkop (*Scopus umbretta*) or rob its nest if they can help it. "Once in the company of a Bushman," says Dornan, "I wanted to shoot one of these birds, but he said it would be bad, and that Khauna would not like it, so I desisted." If a person is struck by lightning, he is supposed to have got in the way of the lightning bird when trying to rob its nest. "The religion of the Kalahari Bushmen," concludes Dornan, "is thus a kind of dualism in which two powers, one good, Thora or Huwe, and one bad, Khauna, are engaged in a struggle for the mastery."[3]

The word *Gauna* (*//gauwa*), finally, crops up again among the

[1] Op. cit., 410.
[2] *Pygmies and Bushmen*, 150, 153, 167–8.
[3] Op. cit., 410–11.

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Nama. Nama influence is seen also in the word *Heiseb* found among the Heikum of the Etosha Pan and of North-East Ondonga. This is one of the names applied to the mythical hero more commonly known as *Heitsi Eibib*, who figures so prominently in the religious system of the Nama. Its absence from the other Bushman tribes is clearly suggestive, although the name *Hishe* found among the Naron and Auen may possibly be a corruption of it. The various current interpretations of *//gaua* as "the evil being", "the devil" or "Satan" must likewise be dismissed as alien to native Bushman ideas. The word has been widely used by missionaries among the Nama for "Devil", and there can be little doubt that it is ultimately from this source that such interpretations have been derived.

All these direct symptoms of borrowing from other peoples show clearly that the religious conceptions of the Northern Bushmen as recorded above can by no means be regarded as untainted by foreign influences. The final interpretation of these conceptions will therefore have to take into account the religious ideas of the neighbouring peoples as well, especially of the Nama, in order that a full basis for discussion may be obtained. This is all the more necessary since the information relating to them as now held by the Bushmen is hardly sufficient to enable us to determine satisfactorily the full meaning attached to them by the people, to determine, that is, what part they really play in native life. For the moment, however, it may be of service if we attempt to reduce to some order the various accounts given by our authorities of these conceptions.

A general survey of the attributes said to be vested in the different beings figuring in the religion and mythology of the Northern Bushmen seems to show that on the whole we have to deal with two main conceptions. There is in the first place the conception known variously to the North-Western Bushmen as *Huwe*, *Xu*, *Xuwa*, *Hishe*, or *Erob*, and to the North-Eastern Bushmen as *Thora* or *Huwe*. By Lebzelter, whose account cannot be entirely freed from a suspicion of prejudice in favour of the monotheistic doctrine associated with the name of Pater W. Schmidt and his school of disciples, *Xu* or *Erob* is spoken of as an anthropomorphic "supreme good being" dwelling in a house in the sky, where he receives the souls of the dead. He is regarded as the creator; he controls the rain and its associated phenomena of thunder and lightning, and punishes evil-doers with lightning; he sends good fortune in hunting and in the collection of veldkos, is prayed to before and after hunting, and is

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776 honoured with certain ritual observances connected with the chase; [782] he is also prayed to for rain, before travel, and in case of illness; [224] and finally it is from him that the magicians obtain their special [756] powers. By the Eastern Kung he is said to have a wife and many children; among the other Kung and the Heikum he figures alone.

184 Few of these attributes are mentioned by Miss Bleek in her remarks 776 upon *Hishe* among the Naron and Auen, and upon *Huwe* among the !O !Kung. But there are certain points of agreement. *Hishe* dwells in [775] a house in the east, to which the ghosts of the dead repair by day; [224] he is regarded as the creator, and as the protector of game and hunting. On the other hand *Hishe-Huwe*, sometimes alone, sometimes in double [881] guise as man and woman, sometimes "followed by children like [114] baboons", figures prominently in the boys' puberty ceremonies, which are not referred to at all by Lebzelter. At the same time, since these ceremonies certainly have much to do with hunting, their association with *Hishe-Huwe* is not inconsistent with his character as protector of the game and hunting, although of course it is hardly likely that this provides the only explanation for his figuring in them. Nor [782] is he ever prayed to among these tribes, save where the name *Huwe* is substituted by the !O !Kung for *//nwa-se*, the New Moon, in the prayer for rain. Most of the prayers for food and rain, however, are directed to the heavenly bodies, especially the Moon.

A closer agreement with Lebzelter's account is provided by Dornan's [114] discussion of *Thora-Huwe* among the North-Eastern Bushmen. *Thora* is here said to be the creator who is over all things, he sends [821] rain and game, plenty of food and good luck in hunting, certain [224] hunting observances are directed towards him, he wards off disease, [753] and protects the Bushmen from danger.

It is possible also to find a connection in certain respects between *Huwe* and the conception of the Mantis among the Southern Bushmen. Among the Cape Bushmen, it is true, the Mantis is primarily a mythological character, the central figure of an elaborate series of myths relating to him and his "family". He is never worshipped, but on [782] the other hand, like *Huwe*, he has creative powers, and is also said to [825] have made certain bucks and to protect them. Mention is further made by these Bushmen of an afterworld to which go the spirits [775] of the dead, but there is nothing at all to link this up with the Mantis, just as there is nothing to link up the afterworld of the North-Eastern Bushmen with *Thora*. The resemblance between the Mantis and *Huwe* is far more noticeable among the Bushmen of Basutoland.

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makes thunder and lightning, the stars are his fire, and he kills people by means of shooting stars. Finally, among the Eastern Kung, */nawa* or the chief of the *//gauab* figures as the creator, and, as the executive of *Xu*, he is the source of good luck in hunting and is honoured with the first-offerings of the chase and prayers for success; he is also, however, most frequently the cause of illness. It seems extremely probable that in all these cases the conceptions of *Huwe* on the one hand and of *//gaua* on the other have been blended or confused; they are sufficiently distinct in other respects to make this assumption appear not entirely groundless. The same explanation may be advanced for the conflicting reports given by Miss Bleek and by Fourie of one important feature in the Auen puberty ceremonies for boys: according to the former, it is *Hishe* who figures in the special dances, while the latter states that this function is fulfilled by *Gaua*. *//gaua*, it will be remembered, also presides at a girl's puberty dance among the !O Kung. Whether we have here a similar confusion is uncertain, since in none of the other Bushman tribes do the supernatural beings figure in these ceremonies for girls. But a suggestion that this may be the case is conveyed by the fact that one of Miss Bleek's informants identified *//gaua* with *Ndzambi*, the Mbunda (Bantu) word for deity, used by the missionaries for "God", while another spoke of *//gaua* as the "father" of the Bushmen.

We are left, therefore, with the conception of *Huwe*, *Thora*, or the Mantis (among the Basutoland Bushmen) as the creator, the source of the beneficent rain and of good luck in hunting and food gathering, and the protector of his people from illness and danger; and with the conception of *//gaua* first as the ghosts of the dead and then as a personified being, in both cases the source of illness and death, inflicted in the latter case through the medium of thunder, lightning, shooting stars, etc. This analysis is not advanced as an interpretation of the meaning of these beings, nor does it ignore the possibility of elements having been borrowed from other peoples; it is intended merely to summarize briefly what appear to be from the accounts of our authorities the principal religious conceptions common to most of the Bushmen of the present time.

Magic and Magicians

In all the Bushman tribes people are found who deal in the mysterious or supernatural, who are regarded as endowed with

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[756] supernatural powers, or who are able to control, either for social purposes or for their own ends, the spiritual forces upon which the social welfare depends. There is no English word which adequately describes them, but such persons may be loosely termed magicians.

Among the Cape Bushmen, these magicians, who might be of either sex, were called */gixa* (plural, */giten*). There is unfortunately [114] no information available as to how they acquired their powers, nor have we any clear description of the part they played in the life of the community. A few details about them may, however, be gathered from the texts collected by Bleek and Lloyd. Some magicians were [821] rainmakers, who went out to catch the rain bull and lead it over the land bringing rain. Others, again, had special powers over particular [825] game animals, such as the springbok or the ostrich. Some magicians were able to assume and go about in the form of animals such as the lion, springbok, jackal, or a little bird; others, even when asleep, knew what was going about at night, and took care of the people, defending them from evil magicians. For some magicians could [757] cause illness by shooting with invisible arrows, and the patients would die, even though doctored; while some were said to eat the flesh of the dead. When a magician died an earthquake took place, [823] and his heart fell, as a shooting star, out of the sky into a waterhole. His powers, however, he continued to possess even after death, [775] for there are mentioned several occasions on which a dead rain-maker was asked to send rain or a game magician to give success in hunting.[1]

These beliefs, fragmentary as they are, show definitely that the magicians were held to possess supernatural powers, which they might use for good or evil; but, apart perhaps from the making of rain, there is nothing to link them up with any cult or public ceremony, or to indicate that they ever played the part of priests.

[184] Among the Naron and Auen, however, the magicians, as we have seen, function at the puberty ceremonies. They introduce *Hishe* [881] into the dances, and make the cuts between the eyebrows of the boys. [793] Among the Naron they are also the priests, who pray to the New Moon for rain; while among the Auen they make rain by sprinkling [821] on the ground a kind of red earth, which they fetch from afar and carry about with them. The magicians, both male and female, are

[1] Bleek, *Bushman Tarts*, 18; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 22.

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also the doctors of the community. The millipede, said to belong to *Hishe*, is only touched by them; they dry it and use it powdered as medicine. [756] [825]

Naron magicians (*tsho k'auba* or */nu k'auba*) do not dress or live differently from the rest of the community. "No one would know them apart," says Miss Bleek, "nor do they seem to have much influence to-day." The Auen seem to have many more magicians than the Naron, by whom they are looked up to in magic matters. Here, according to Kaufmann, the magicians, (*tsho k'au*, */nu k'au* or */geixa*) have their skulls shaved clean, and also carry a few ornaments which may not be worn by other people. The magic art in both tribes is learned by apprenticeship. During the month of the puberty ceremony one or two boys are taught their trade by the old magicians. At the next ceremony they return and are taught more; and boys who have been with a magician for many years can when they become older succeed their master.[1] [184] [868]

Magicians among the Kung are of two kinds, and both are called in especially for illness. The */u k'au*, who sucks out the disease from the body of the patient, is "an evil person, who speaks to no one and always looks black"; while the */ue k'au*, according to Vedder, is the ordinary worker in magic and the poison-mixer, and also prepares medicines from herbs and roots by cooking.[2] Lebzelter gives further information about the magicians. Both men and women can be summoned by the "great captain" to exercise this calling. The power they receive from him is greater than that of all the spirits with the exception of */nawa*, and is equal to that of the latter. Magicians are thus "born and not made", to use Lebzelter's expression, but nevertheless it appears that they have to learn the secrets of their calling by apprenticeship. They accompany the old magicians at least once in the search for medicine plants, and are then subjected to a test. The old magicians in the customary manner attempt to cure a sick person by sucking out the "disease poison" ("Krankheitsgift") or the "spirits of disease" from the body of the patient; then they administer all the "disease poison" extracted by them to the initiates. If the latter do not die from this treatment, they have satisfactorily passed the test! [184] [755] [278] [787]

The magicians, apart from being able to cure illnesses by banishing the "spirits of disease" from the body of the patient, also have the [787]

[1] D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 28; Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 139.
[2] "Grammatik der !kû-Buschmannsprache," 8-9.

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faculty of seeing and speaking to the *//gauab*, and only they know and utter the real name, */nawa*, of the chief of the latter. The evening before a hunting expedition they pray to *//gauab* for help, and certain of them also have the power of conjuring down rain. This they achieve in the following manner. When rain is needed, all the people of the camp take part in a dance, during which they sing over and over again a mournful song lamenting the condition of hunger and thirst to which they are reduced. "Finally the great captain in the sky hears the lamentation. The magician goes outside the camp and sees that a thin cord is being let down from the sky. He climbs a certain way up this, but the great captain comes down to meet him half-way. As soon as the magician sees the great captain, he throws a powder up to him; whereupon the great captain lifts him up high and takes him into his house. There the magician prays to him: 'Lord, help us, the children are dying, we thirst and hunger.' So long does he pray and plead that at last the captain says: 'It is well, I shall send water, that the children may have water and veldkos.' Then he again accompanies the magician half-way down the cord. As soon as the latter has reached the ground, he releases his hold upon the cord, which is at once drawn up again. The rain follows immediately."[1]

Among the !O Kung in Angola there are also two kinds of magicians. The */num-k'au* officiates at puberty dances, makes scarifications, sees spirits, and also conjures up *//gaua*, while the *tsho-k'au* heals the sick by singing, dancing, and extracting the evil from the patient's body through sucking. For this he receives a present. Both men and women apparently can become magicians of either kind, if taught by an older practitioner. There is said to be no ceremony of initiation for them, nor do they wear a special dress of any kind.[2]

It will be noticed that both terms which distinguish the two classes of magician among the Kung and the !O Kung are also found among the Naron and Auen for magicians. This would suggest that there is a similar division of functions in these tribes also, but neither Miss Bleek nor Kaufmann definitely states this.

The origin of magic among the Naron and Auen is said by Fourie to be attributed to *//gaua*, and he gives the following myth in confirmation.[3] "The Bushman *Tji-Tji* is said to have been initiated

[1] Lebzelter, "Religiösen Vorstellungen usw.," 408–9; *idem*, "Bei den !Kun-Buschleuten," 15.
[2] D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," 55; "Bushmen of Central Angola," 124.
[3] "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 104.

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by *Gaua* 'on the other side' into the use of the small magic quiver. *Tji-Tji* had killed a gemsbok. *Gaua* arrived on the scene and said, 'I have come to you; you need not be afraid; both of us can sleep here.' After having consumed the animal and slept *Tji-Tji* remarked to *Gaua*, 'Give me that stuff (*//ai*).' The latter replied, 'If I give you the *//ai*, what will you pay me?' *Tji-Tji* answered, 'I will give you the horns.' *Gaua* then took the horns, made the little arrows out of them, invested them with *//ai* and before departing taught *Tji-Tji* the *//ai* dance. From that time the Bushmen have known how to use magic."

The small magic quiver and arrows to which reference is here made are no doubt the miniature weapons found among all the North-Western tribes. In a set seen by the writer the bow, made of a piece of bone, was barely 10 cm. long, and the arrows, for which sharp thorns were used, were small in proportion. Similar arrows described by other writers consisted of a stalk of grass about 6 cm. long and a head of bone or hard wood about 4 cm. long. This head was sharpened at the end inserted into the grass stalk, while the protruding end was blunted.[1]

The range of these arrows is of course very limited, and different suggestions have been put forward as to their use. They are certainly not children's toys, as these miniature bows and arrows are used only by men, who carry them concealed about their persons. From various descriptions it appears that in some cases the arrows are definitely poisoned, and consequently among Germans the name "Bushman revolver" has become applied to these miniature sets. It is claimed that they are used as real weapons and that the poison on the arrow is strong enough to bring about the death of anybody struck by it. On the other hand, Miss Bleek says that among the Naron they are not poisoned, but are used by magicians who quarrel among themselves to settle their differences. "A medicine man wishing to destroy another, comes up close and shoots at the opponent's kaross with one of these arrows, blunt end foremost. The missile falls harmlessly to the ground, but the victim dies of the magic."[2] This statement is supported by the report of a case tried at Windhoek in 1912, where it was maintained, inter alia, that a poisoned arrow of this kind had been used against the accused. In the evidence, however, it was stated by several witnesses that these

[1] Schapera, "Bows and Arrows of the Bushmen," 116–17, and references.
[2] *Naron*, 28.

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114 411 754 756 arrows are not poisoned but are used for "witchcraft", and "if they are shot in the direction of an enemy, be he 100 kilos or more away, witchcraft will bring about his death".[1] The myth recorded by Fourie also lends support to the idea that these arrows are used for magical purposes. It is possible, too, that something similar is implied in the statement, mentioned above, that among the Cape Bushmen magicians caused illness by shooting with invisible arrows, but it should be noted that no such weapons as those here described have yet been found among them.

789 Apart from the special magic practised by magicians and associated with them, there are among all the Bushmen various usages and beliefs of a nature which may be generally termed magical, and which 224 are apparently common property. Many of the hunting observances 787 already described fall into this category. So, too, does divination. [184] Among the Cape Bushmen this occurs principally in the form of beliefs in the efficacy of omens, of which there are a great number with diverse significations. They say they feel in their bodies that certain things are going to happen; there is a kind of beating of the flesh which tells them things. Those who are stupid do not understand these teachings and disobey them, with the result that they get into trouble, are killed by a lion, and so on. These beatings tell those who understand them which way not to go, and which arrow it is better not to use, and also warn them when people are coming. They inform the hunter when game is close at hand, tell people where they can find the person for whom they are in search, i.e. which way to go, and so on.[2]

184 787 In the more northerly tribes is found the use of pieces of wood, leather or bone as divining bones or dice. These are usually four in number, and roughly triangular in shape, two of them being broad, the other two longer and thinner. The former are called male, the latter female. In the Eastern Kalahari they are usually each marked in a special way and named, but this is not found further west. The bones may be owned and used by anyone, not only by magicians. They are used in a very crude manner: the inquirer goes on throwing them on to his kaross until he gets a favourable answer. Such bones are frequently found among the Northern and Central Kalahari Bushmen, and occasionally among those dwelling on the southern

[1] *Report on the Natives of South-West Africa and their Treatment by Germany* (Cd. 9146), 1918, p. 172.
[2] Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 17–18; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 330–9.

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immune to the effects of snake and scorpion poison.[1] One of these animals is killed, and its poison, diluted with water and urine, is rubbed in small quantities into small cuts made in the skin, or the poison sacs are pulped and boiled, and then swallowed in small doses. Schinz records an experiment made by himself on a Bushman doctor claiming this immunity.[2] He selected twelve scorpions and placed them, by means of forceps, on different parts of the man's body—hands, legs, arms, mouth, and testicles. Almost all of them stung the flesh deeply once or twice, in every instance causing a large drop of white matter to appear; then they crawled about leisurely, but made no further attempts at stinging. "The old man maintained that he felt no pain, and I have no reason to distrust him, as he would hardly have allowed himself to be stung by scorpions on the most sensitive parts of his body, merely to satisfy my curiosity, if the poison would have had any effects on him; even a full hour after our attempt the spots where he had been stung showed not the slightest change." This experiment seems therefore to show that there may be some foundation to the claim of immunity. The inoculation was apparently made in this case during the apprenticeship of the "doctor", under the direction of his master. Our main authorities on the Bushmen do not mention this practice at all, but I have myself spoken to several detribalized Bushmen and Nama in Little Namaqualand who claimed a similar immunity. Unfortunately I neglected to inquire further into the matter, beyond ascertaining the means of immunization.

Knowledge of Times and Seasons

In their system of time-reckoning the Bushmen make use chiefly of meteorological elements, based on recurrent changes in wind and weather, and of astronomical elements, based on observations of the sun, stars, and moon. Their larger divisions of time are the seasons, which, owing to their effect on the food supply and on the movements of the people, assume a pronounced importance in Bushman life. The division of the seasons is established by the rainfall. The Cape Bushmen distinguished four seasons, rendered by Bleek and Lloyd in the English equivalents of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, but the exact meaning of the native terms is not given.

[1] Campbell, *Journey in S. Africa*, 441; Thompson, *Travels in S. Africa*, i, 399; Cornell, *The Glamour of Prospecting*, 232.
[2] Op. cit., 393–6.